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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES.

FIFTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

4 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CXXXI.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE THIRD DAY OF MARCH
TO THE SEVENTEENTH DAY OF MARCH, 1904.

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION.

1904.

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CHRONOLOGY OF "THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 3RD MARCH, 1904.

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UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Metropolitan Common Scheme (Farnborough) Provisional Order Bill; Metropolitan Common Scheme (Hillingdon East) Provisional Order Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time to-morrow 38

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have agreed to, Dumbarton Tramways Order Confirmation Bill, without Amendment. That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to make further provisions for the foundation of a Dean and Chapter of Newcastle; and for other purposes connected therewith." [Newcastle Chapter (Amendment) Bill [Lords.] 38

PETITIONS.

LICENCE HOLDERS.—Petition from Tynemouth, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table 39

LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Bath (two); Oldham; Birmingham; Manchester; Ingatestone; Skegness; Westminster; Skewan; Dolgelly; Renton; Church Cresley; Salisbury; Heckmondwike; Llanelly (two); Sunderland; Corwen; Reeth; Hastings; Bucklow Hill; Maentwrog Uchaf; Birmingham; Stretford; Hunwick; St. Ives; Field Road; Bridgnorth Queensbury; Forest Gate; Stratford; Maentwrog Isaf; Shipley; Windhill (two); Saltaire; Barnstaple; Kingsbridge; Spalding;

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Torquay; Salford Dock; Woodleigh Waterfoot; Rawtenstall (two); Crawshawbooth (two); Waterfoot; Lumb in Rossendale; Sunnyside; Clowbridge; Hareholme; Goodshaw; Cloughfold; Newchurch; Cumberworth; Newark; Bethania; Nottingham; Isleham; Whitby; Tollington Park; Snodland; Llandudno; Chesterton; and Seaton Delaval; to lie upon the Table .. 39

Transvaal (Chinese Labour Ordinance).—Petitions for withdrawal; from Heckmondwike; and Paisley; to lie upon the Table 39

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Church Estates Commission.—Copy presented, of Fifty-third Report from the Church Estates Commissioners for the year preceding 1st March, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 39

Polling Districts (County of Dorset). Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of the county of Dorset altering certain Polling Districts in the Northern Parliamentary Division [by Act]; to lie upon the Table .. 39

Education (Scotland) (Continuation Classes).—Copy presented, of Code of Regulations for Continuation Classes providing further instruction for those who have left school, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 40

Railway, etc., Bills.—Return presented, relative thereto (ordered 2nd March: *Mr. Gerald Balfour*); to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 81] .. 40

Deaths from Starvation or Accelerated by Privation (London).—Address for "Return of the number of all deaths in the Administrative County of London in the year 1903 upon which a Coroner's jury has returned a verdict of Death from Starvation or Death accelerated by Privation, together with any observations furnished to the Local Government Board by Boards of Guardians with reference to cases included in the Return (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 279, of Session 1903)."—(*Mr. Talbot*) 40

British Museum.—Copy ordered, "of Account of the Income and Expenditure of the British Museum (Special Trust Funds) for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1904; and Return of the number of persons admitted to visit the Museum and the British Museum (Natural History) in each year from 1898 to 1903, both years inclusive; together with a statement of the progress made in the arrangement and description of the collections, and an account of objects added to them in the year 1903."—(*Mr. John Morley*) 40

Foreign Trade and Commerce.—Copy ordered, "of Monthly Accounts relating to the Trade and Commerce of certain foreign countries and British possessions."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 82] 40

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German Inquiry into Dumping.—Question, Mr. Stuart-Wortley (Sheffield, Hallam); Answer, Earl Percy 42

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CHINESE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL—OPPOSITION OF NATIVES.—Question, Mr. John Morley (Montrose Burghs); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 50

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ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT.—Question, Sir W. Hart Dyke (Kent, Dartford); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 50

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NEW BILLS.

Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Scotland) Bill.—"To authorise the transfer to the Secretary for Scotland of certain powers and duties under the Acts relating to Reformatory and Industrial Schools," presented by Mr. Cochrane; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 107.] 85

Old Age Pensions (No. 3) Bill.—"To establish a system of Old Age Pensions," presented by Sir James Rankin; supported by Mr. Laurence Hardy, Mr. Hozier, Sir Mark Stewart, Mr. Lambert, and Mr. Bousfield; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 108.] .. 85

Congested Districts (Scotland) Bill.—"To amend the provisions of The Congested Districts (Scotland) Act, 1897, as to the style and title of the Commissioners, the execution of deeds by them, and the application of the Fund constituted by the said Act," presented by Mr. A. Graham Murray; supported by the Lord Advocate; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 109.] 85

Foreign Trawlers Regulation Bill.—"To provide for the better prevention of fishing by Foreign Trawl Vessels within areas closed to British Trawl Vessels," presented by Mr. Black; supported by Mr. Weir, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Harmsworth, Mr. John Wilson (Falkirk), Mr. Ainsworth, and Captain Ellice; to be read a second time upon Friday, 17th June, and to be printed. [Bill 110.] 85

Trawlers' Certificates Suspension Bill.—"To enable courts to suspend the Certificates of Trawlers convicted of illegal trawling," presented by Mr. Harmsworth; supported by Mr. Weir, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. John Wilson (Falkirk), Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Black, and Mr. Cathcart Wason. To be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 111.] .. 86

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SUPPLY [1ST ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,634,200, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other Charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

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Mr. Edmund Robertson (*Dundee*) 90
Sir John Colomb (*Great Yarmouth*) 93
Mr. Buchanan (*Perthshire, E.*) 94
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Mr. O'Mara (*Kilkenny, S.*) 100
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 102
Mr. Broadhurst (*Leicester*) 104
Mr. Arthur Lee 106
Mr. Munro Ferguson (*Leith Burghs*) 114
General Laurie (*Pembroke and Haverfordwest*) 115
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) 115
Mr. Whitley (*Halifax*) 117
The Secretary to the Admiralty (*Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge*) .. 118
Mr. MacVeagh (*Down, S.*) 119
Mr. Charles Devlin (*Galway*) 120
Mr. Whitley 121

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries and Allowances of Superintending Officers and others) be reduced by £1,000."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Mr. Pretyman 121

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Whitley 122

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Item B (Dockyards at Home) be reduced by £1,000."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Mr. Arthur Lee 122
Mr. Herbert Samuel (*Yorkshire, Cleveland*) 123

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Buchanan 123

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item C (Dockyards Abroad) be reduced by £1,000."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 123
Mr. William Redmond (*Clare, E.*) 124
Mr. Arthur Lee 126

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Motion again proposed.

Motion made, and Question put, "That Item C (Dockyards Abroad) be reduced by £4,600."—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 102; Noes, 251. (Division List No. 38.)

Original Question again proposed.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the Clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee to report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY [FIRST ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,634,200, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

Mr. Joseph Walton (*Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley*) 130

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item C (Dockyards Abroad) be reduced by £1,000."—(*Mr. Joseph Walton.*)

Mr. Arthur Lee 131

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

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Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Courtenay Warner .. 132

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item E (Naval Barracks and General Fleet Services), be reduced by £7,000."—(*Mr. Courtenay Warner.*)

Mr. Broadhurst .. 133
Mr. Arthur Lee .. 134
Mr. Flynn (Cork Co., N.) .. 135
Mr. Helme (Lancashire, Lancaster) .. 136
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Sir John Colomb .. 137
Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.) .. 137
Mr. Arthur Lee .. 138
Mr. Broadhurst .. 138
Mr. Courtenay Warner .. 140

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 107 ; Noes, 163. (Division List No. 39.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury) .. 141

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item F (Marine Barracks) be reduced by £2,000."—(*Mr. Runciman.*)

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Mr. Arthur Lee .. 152
Mr. Labouchere .. 153
Mr. Reginald Lucas (Portsmouth) .. 154
Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury) .. 155

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Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 109 ; Noes, 171. (Division List No. 40.)

Original Question again proposed—

Mr. PRETYMAN rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 173 ; Noes, 109. (Division List No. 41.)

Question put accordingly, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,634,200, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other Charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 184 ; Noes, 85. (Division List No. 42.)

And, it being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next ; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

Adjourned at eighteen Minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 4TH MARCH, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—Site for Duke of York's School [H.L.]. The same was ordered to lie on the Table 165

MARYLEBONE CHAPELS (ST. JAMES, WESTMORELAND STREET.)—(Petition for Bill). Examiners' Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next 165

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.].—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee 165

Victoria University of Yorkshire Bill [H.L.].—Victoria University of Manchester Bill [H.L.]. Reports from His Majesty's Attorney-General received, and ordered to lie on the Table 165

Manchester Ship Canal (Finance) Bill [H.L.].—The Lord Balfour informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The order made on the 22nd of February last, discharged, and Bill committed 165

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St. Mary Woolnoth Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 165

Liverpool and Wigan Churches Bill [H.L.]; Victoria University of Yorkshire Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 165

Victoria University of Manchester Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª, and committed 165

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

WAR OFFICE.—Report of the War Office (Re-constitution) Committee: Parts I. and II. 165

QUEEN ANNE'S BOUNTY.—Annual Report and Accounts of the Governors for the year ended 31st December, 1903.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 165

BANKRUPTCY COURTS (IRELAND).—Returns of the Official Assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland, and the local courts, Belfast and Cork, for the year 1903. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 166

NEW BILL.

Allotments (London) Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to facilitate the provision of allotments by the London County Council. Was presented by the Earl Carrington; read 1ª; and to be printed. [No. 20.] 166

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

The Earl of Wemyss 166

CHINESE LABOUR FOR THE TRANSVAAL.

Lord Stanmore 167

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for copies of the Ordinances with respect to immigrants now in force in the Island of Trinidad."—(*The Lord Stanmore.*)

The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Duke of Marlborough*) 179
Lord Stanley of Alderley 183
The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 187
The Marquess of Ripon 190
Earl Carrington 195
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 198
Earl Spencer 200
Lord Stanmore 201

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Polling Districts (Councils) Bill [H.L.]; Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 202

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Weights and Measures (Metric System Bill) [H.L.].—The Lord Addington added to the Select Committee 202

House adjourned at a quarter before Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 4TH MARCH, 1904.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Blyth and Cowpen Gas Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 202

Metropolitan Common Scheme (Farnborough) Provisional Order Bill.—Metropolitan Common Scheme (Hillingdon East) Provisional Order Bill. Read a second time, and committed 202

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP B).—Mr. Fison reported from the Committee on Group B of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Tuesday next, at Half-past Eleven o'clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 203

Corbridge Gas Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 203

Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time Bill).—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed .. 203

Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill.—Reported, with an Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 203

Kirkby-in-Ashfield Urban District Gas Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 203

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have agreed to—Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill, with Amendments 203

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alterations of law; from Northwich; Long Clawson (two); Runcorn; Wakefield; Lancaster; Tipton Heath; Portmadoc; Repton; Bristol; Willesden; Govan; Llandarmoninyal; Hull; Derby (three); Cockermouth; Southport (three); Ainsdale; Crossens; Plumstead; Northop Hall; Bwlcedwryn; Leicester; Okehampton; Penketh; Ystradgynlais (two); Llangynidr; Chorley; Brimington; Ashwell; Brighton (two); Hove; Liverpool; Pontardawe; Pontardulais; Brynamman; and Oxford; to lie upon the Table 203

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOUR ORDINANCE).—Petition from Radcliffe, for withdrawal; to lie upon the Table 203

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BANKRUPTCY COURTS (IRELAND).—Annual Returns presented, of the Official Assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland and the local courts, Belfast and Cork, for the year 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 204

QUEEN ANNE'S BOUNTY.—Copy presented, of Annual Report and Accounts of the Governors for the year 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 204

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1904–05 (VOTE ON ACCOUNT).—Estimate presented, showing the several Services for which a Vote on Account is required for the year ending 31st March, 1905 [by Command]; Referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 83] 204

PAUPERISM (ENGLAND AND WALES) (HALF-YEARLY STATEMENTS).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 15th February: *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 84.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

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CASHING POSTAL ORDERS AT SUB-POST OFFICES.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Lord Stanley 205

POST OFFICE DEFERRED ANNUITIES.—Question, Sir James Rankin (Herefordshire, Leominster); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 205

TRANSFER OF LOCK-KEEPER THOMAS MADDEN.—Question, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 206

MILITARY EXPENDITURE.—Question, Sir Edgar Vincent (Exeter); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 206

MILITARY EXPENDITURE OF FRANCE, RUSSIA, GERMANY, AND AUSTRIA.—Question, Sir Edgar Vincent; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 207

4TH V.B. DEVON REGIMENT.—Question, Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 207

TOWN TENANTS (IRELAND) BILL [SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. MacVeagh (*Down, S.*) 208
Mr. Charles Devlin (*Galway*) 218

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. MacVeagh.*)

Mr. Herbert Robertson (*Hackney, S.*) 221
Mr. Kimber (*Wandsworth*) 224

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Herbert Robertson.*)

Question proposed, " That the word ' now ' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Mooney (*Dublin County, S.*) 228
Mr. Wm. Moore (*Antrim, N.*) 231
Mr. Channing (*Northamptonshire, E.*) 234
Sir Frederick Banbury (*Camberwell, Peckham*) 236
Mr. T. M. Healy (*Louth, N.*) 237
Sir John Colomb (*Great Yarmouth*) 242
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Mr. O'Shaughnessy (*Limerick, W.*) 246
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The Attorney-General for Ireland (*Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.*) .. 251
Mr. Field (*Dublin, St. Patrick*) 257
Mr. Malcolm (*Suffolk, Stowmarket*) 260
Mr. Flavin (*Kerry, N.*) 261

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 162 ; Noes, 199. (Division List No. 43.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

Adjourned at twenty-two minutes before Six of the Clock, till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS, MONDAY, 7TH MARCH, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—

Southend Water.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table 265

Ipswich Dock Commission Bill [H.L.].—The LORD BALFOUR informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 22nd and the 25th of February last, discharged, and Bill committed 265

Withnell Gas Bill [H.L.].—The Lord BALFOUR informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. The orders made on the 19th and 25th of February last discharged. Ordered, That the Bill be not further proceeded with 265

Isle of Thanet Light Railways Bill [H.L.].—The Lord BALFOUR informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. The orders made on the 22nd and 25th of February last discharged. Ordered, That the Bill be not further proceeded with 265

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Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.].—The order made on the 25th of February last appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bill, discharged 265

Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time Bill) [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.], and other Bills, do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; read, and agreed to. All petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill 265

Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.].—Report by the Board of Trade on the above Bill. Laid before the House pursuant to Standing Order No. 90 266

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—No. 3124. Chile (Coquimbo, etc.) 266

TREATY SERIES, No. 4 (1904).—Agreement between the United Kingdom and Spain, providing for the settlement by arbitration of certain classes of questions which may arise between the two Governments; signed at London, 27th February, 1904 266

PRIMARY EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Report of Mr. F. H. Dale, His Majesty's Inspector of Schools, Board of Education, Whitehall, London 266

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP.—Supplement to the annual report of the chief inspector of factories and workshops, for the year 1902: Return of persons employed in factories, workshops, and laundries (textile factories, laundries) 266

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—Report and Papers relating to the training of teachers for the year 1902-1903.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 266

NEW BILLS.

PRIZE COURTS BILL [H.L.] (No. 21).—A Bill for amending the law relating to the administration of oaths for the purpose of proceedings in Prize Courts; and Naval Prize Bill [H.L.] (No. 22).—A Bill to consolidate, with Amendments, the enactments relating to Naval Prize of War. Were presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1^a; and to be printed 266

THE DEATH OF LORD SHAND.

The Lord Chancellor (The Earl of Halsbury) 267

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MONDAY, 7TH MARCH, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

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Whitby Gas Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time .. 267

Brymbo Water Bill; Great Central and Midland Joint Railways Bill; Great Central Railway Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 267

Sheppy Gas Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 267

Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill.—Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to 268

St. Marylebone Electric Lighting Bill.—Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 268

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BIRMINGHAM BISHOPRIC.—Two petitions from Birmingham, for establishment; to lie upon the Table 268

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LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Lewes; Crouch End; Dulwich; Berwick-upon-Tweed; Longton; Launceston; Bacup; Bishopsgate; Guildford; Clacton on Sea (two); Allendale; Lincoln; Bradford; Little Horton; Felingwm; Cariad Dyffryn; Penygroes; Reading and Henley on Thames; Ryde; Highgate; Poynton; Northampton; Dartmouth; Stonehaven; Patricroft; and Manchester; to lie upon the Table 268

PRASAD, MADHO.—Petition of Madho Prasad, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table 268

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.—Copy presented, of Supplement to the Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Workshops for the year 1902: Return of persons employed in Factories, Workshops, and Laundries:—Textile Factories, Laundries [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 268

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Report and Papers relating to the Training of Teachers for the year 1902–3 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 268

EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Report of Mr. F. H. Dale, His Majesty's Inspector of Schools, Board of Education, on Primary Education in Ireland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 268

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EAST INDIA (COTTON.)—Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to Improvement in Indian Cotton [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 269

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 to 1903.—Copy presented, of an Order, dated the 3rd March, 1904, revoking Order No. 6,794, defining a Foreign Animals Quarantine Station at Southampton [by Act]; to lie upon the Table .. 269

RAILWAYS ABANDONMENT.—Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting the Saddleworth and Springhead Tramways Abandonment Bill and the objects thereof [pursuant to Standing Order 158B]; referred to the Committee on the Bill 269

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 3124 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 269

TREATY SERIES (No. 4, 1904).—Copy presented, of Agreement between the United Kingdom and Spain, providing for the settlement by arbitration of certain classes of questions which may arise between the two Governments. Signed at London, 27th February, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 269

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Inquiry into Charities (County of Lancaster), Further Return relative thereto [ordered 8th August, 1898; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; and Inquiry into Charities (County Borough of Bolton), Return relative thereto [ordered 22nd February; *Mr. Griffith Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 85.] 269

TRADE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM WITH GERMANY.—Return ordered, "showing value of imports into the United Kingdom from, and exports from the United Kingdom to, the German Empire during the last ten years, as recorded in (a) the German official Returns, (b) Reports of the Board of Trade; together with a Memorandum explaining, as far as possible, the discrepancies between the Germans and British figures, and the method of collecting the data upon which the Returns are based employed in the United Kingdom and Germany, respectively."—(*Mr. White Ridley.*) 269

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THE CABINET RESIGNATIONS—MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.—Mr. JOHN ELLIS, Member for Nottinghamshire (Rushcliffe Division), rose in his place and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "The omission of the Prime Minister to give the House a full account of the proceedings in relation to the causes and circumstances of the resignations of a number of the members of his Cabinet during last autumn, especially having regard to the statements made by them as to such causes and circumstances."
And, the pleasure of the House having been signified, the Motion stood over, under Standing Order No. 10, until this Evening's Sitting .. 328

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COMMONS.—Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to consider every Report made by the Board of Agriculture certifying the expediency of any Provisional Order for the enclosure or regulation of a common, and presented to the House during the last or present sessions, before a Bill be brought in for the confirmation of such Order.

Ordered, That it be an instruction to the Committee that they have power in respect of each such Provisional Order to inquire and report to the House whether the same should be confirmed by Parliament; and, if so, whether with or without modification, and in the event of their being of opinion that the same should not be confirmed, except subject to modifications, to report such modifications accordingly with a view to such Provisional Order being remitted to the Board of Agriculture.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Twelve Members; Seven to be nominated by the House, and Five by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That five be the quorum.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*) 331

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Local Government (Scotland) Act (1894) Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Local Government (Scotland) 'Act, 1894,'" presented by Mr. Cathcart Wason; supported by Sir William Arrol, Mr. Weir, Sir Andrew Agnew, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. Alexander Cross, Mr. Harmsworth, Colonel Denny, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. James Reid, Mr. John Dewar, and Sir J. Batty Tuke; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 16th March, and to be printed. [Bill 112.] 332

Sale of Whisky Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the Sale of Whisky, and to provide for the marking of casks and other vessels containing Whisky," presented by Sir Herbert Maxwell; supported by Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Captain Balfour, and Mr. Gordon . to be read a second time upon Wednesday 16th March, and to be printed. [Bill 113.] 332

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).—Order for Committee read.

The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.*) 332

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (*Stirling Burghs*) 350
Mr. J. F. Hope (*Sheffield, Brightside*) 355
Colonel Kenyon-Slaney (*Shropshire, Newport*) 362

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to insert the words, 'in the opinion of this House, it is expedient to enable His Majesty in times of Imperial emergency to raise money to an amount not exceeding £5,000,000 for military purposes without the previous consent of Parliament.'"—(*Mr. J. F. Hope.*)

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Question proposed, " That the words proposed to be left out, stand part of the Question."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.*) 365
Mr. Blake (*Longford, S.*) 371
Sir J. Fergusson (*Manchester, N.E.*) 372
Mr. O'Mara (*Kilkenny. S.*) 374
Colonel Sandys (*Lancashire, Bootle*) 375

Question put and agreed to.

Main Question again proposed.

Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 376
Sir John Colomb (*Great Yarmouth*) 387
Mr. Buchanan (*Perthshire, E.*) 389

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

CABINET RESIGNATIONS.

ADJOURNMENT (UNDER STANDING ORDER No. 10).

Mr. John Ellis (*Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe*) 394
Mr. Corrie (*Warickshire, Rugby*) 397

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. John Ellis.*)

The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) 398
Lord George Hamilton (*Middlesex, Ealing*) 417

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 172 ; Noes, 237. (Division List No. 44.)

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Main Question [7th March], " That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. Purvis (*Peterborough*) 426
Mr. Ainsworth (*Argyleshire*) 427
Sir Howard Vincent (*Sheffield. Central*) 428
Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 248
Mr. Guest (*Plymouth*) 430

And, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

NEW BILLS.

NURSES AND PRIVATE NURSING HOMES (REGISTRATION).—Bill to provide for the better training and Registration of Nurses and for the voluntary Registration of Private Nursing Homes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Bignold, Mr. H. D. Green, Captain Bagot, Lord Cecil Manners, and Mr. Malcolm.

Nurses and Private Nursing Homes (Registration) Bill.—"To provide for the better Training and Registration of Nurses and for the voluntary Registration of Private Nursing Homes," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 114.] 432

Adjourned at three minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 8TH MARCH, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Yarmouth Corporation Bill [H.L.]; King's College Hospital Bill [H.L.]. Reports from His Majesty's Attorney-General received, and ordered to lie upon the Table 433

Young and Bell's Patents Bill [H.L.]; London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill [H.L.]; Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [H.L.]; Govan Burgh (Electricity) Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments 433

Manchester Corporation (General Powers) Bill [H.L.]; Read 2ª (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 433

Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill.—Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to 433

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EMIGRATION.—Report on the Emigrants' Information Office, for the year ended 31st December, 1903 433

CANADA.—Resolution of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Quebec on Irish Affairs, With the reply thereto 433

CROWN AGENTS FOR THE COLONIES.—Despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies relating to the commercial business of the Crown Agents for the Colonies 433

INDIA (COTTON).—Improvements in Indian cotton. 433

COAL SUPPLIES (ROYAL COMMISSION).—Second Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of the coal resources of the United Kingdom:—Vol. I.—The Report; Vol. II.—Minutes of evidence and appendices; Vol. III.—Supplement. Plans and diagrams.
Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie upon the Table 433

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MILITARY MANŒUVRES, 1904.—Draft order in Council relative to military manœuvres, 1904 434

JAMAICA.—Rules and regulations for the administration of the prisons in Jamaica 434

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894–1903.—Order No. 6808, dated the 3rd day of March, 1904, revoking Order No. 6794, defining a foreign animals' quarantine station at Southampton 434

SUPERANNUATION.—Treasury Minute, dated 3rd March, 1904, granting a retired allowance to William Matthews, 1st Class Clerk, Controller's Office, London Postal Service, under Section 2 of the Superannuation Act, 1887.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie upon the Table 434

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877.—Statute made by the Governing body of All Souls College, Oxford, on the 21st November, 1903, amending Statute 12A, Clause 2, of the Statutes of the college.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. [No. 23.] .. 434

NEW BILLS.

Shops Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to amend the law relating to shops, presented by the Earl Beauchamp; read 1^a; and to be printed. [No. 24.] 434

Irish Land Bill [H.L.].—A Bill further to amend the law relating to the occupation and ownership of land in Ireland, presented by the Lord Muskerry; read 1^a; and to be printed. [No. 25.] 434

Bishopric of Bristol Bill [H.L.].—[SECOND READING].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord Bishop of Bristol 435

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Lord Bishop of Bristol.*)

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Site for Duke of York's School Bill [H.L.]—[SECOND READING].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

The First Commissioner of Works (*Lord Windsor.*) 435

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*Lord Windsor.*)

On Question, Bill read 2^a.

NAVAL RESERVES.

Lord Brassey 436
The First Lord of the Admiralty (*The Earl of Selborne*) 438
Lord Muskerry 442

House adjourned at Five o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 8TH MARCH, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.—The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means .. 443

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Blyth and Cowpen Gas Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 443

Hampton-in-Arden Gas Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 443

Amersham, Beaconsfield, and District Water Bill (BY ORDER).—Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 22nd March (Evening Sitting) 443

Clyde Navigation (Shieldhall) Dock Bill (BY ORDER). Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell*) .. 443

STANDING ORDERS.—Resolutions reported from the Select Committee:

1. "That, in the case of the Middlesborough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thornaby Tramways, Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct so much of Tramways Nos. 1, 2, 2A, as is outside the Urban District of Eston, be struck out of the Bill unless the necessary consents of the local and road authorities to Tramways Nos. 1, 2, 2A, be proved before the Committee on the Bill, and provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 4 and 5, and so much of Tramway No. 3 as is outside the borough of Thornaby-on-Tees, be struck out of the Bill. That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

2. "That, in the case of the Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill, Standing Order 67 ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that all the townlands in the parish of Convoy be omitted from the Schedule to the Bill. That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

3. "That, in the case of the Leyton Urban District Council, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of the Dairymen, etc., within the Urban District of Leyton, against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

4. "That, in the case of the Acton Improvement Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of the Dairymen, etc., within the Urban District of Acton, against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

5. "That, in the case of the St. Marylebone Electric Lighting Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Gas Light and Coke Company, against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought not to be dispensed with."

First Four Resolutions agreed to.

Report to lie upon the Table 443

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Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill.—Report [this day] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read. Bill to be read a second time. 444

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP D).—Mr. CREMER reported from the Committee on Group D of Private Bills; That, at the meeting of the Committee this day, a letter was received from Colonel Welby, Chairman of the said Committee, stating that he was unable, on account of illness, to attend the Committee this day.

Report to lie upon the Table 444

PETITIONS.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING (LONDON) BILL.—Petition from Battersea, against (praying to be heard by counsel); to lie upon the Table 444

LICENCE HOLDERS.—Petition from Carlisle, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table 445

LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of Law: from New Houghton; Haggerston; Ulverstone; Dorking (two); Plymouth; Baildon; Shipley; Wibsey; East Berwickshire; Aberavon; Heathfield; Eakring; Warrington; Crewkerne; Walthamstow; Bideford; Leiston; Saxmundham; Staines; St. Albans; Walworth; Sutton in Ashfield; Kemnay; Oxford; Cumberland; Peasley Cross; Haddenham; Dublin; and Middleton in Teesdale; to lie upon the Table 445

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOUR ORDINANCE).—Petition from Old Headington, for withdrawal; to lie upon the Table.. 445

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TREASURY CHEST.—Account presented, for the year 1902–3, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 87].. 445

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 3rd March, 1904, granting to William Matthews, 1st Class Clerk, Controller's Office, a Retired Allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 445

NAVY (VICTUALLING YARD MANUFACTURING ACCOUNTS, 1902–3).—Annual Accounts presented, of the Cost of Manufacturing, Provisions, Victualling Stores, etc., at the Home Victualling Yards and Malta Yard for 1902–3, etc., with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 88] 445

CANADA.—Copy presented, of Resolution of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Quebec on Irish Affairs, with the reply thereto [by Command]; to lie upon the Table. 445

EMIGRATION (COLONIES).—Copy presented, of Report on the Emigrants' Information Office for the year ended 31st December, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 464

CROWN AGENTS FOR THE COLONIES.—Copy presented, of Despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies relating to the Commercial Business of the Crown Agents for the Colonies [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 446

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JAMAICA.—Copy presented, of Rules and Regulations for the Administration of the Prisons in Jamaica [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 446

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).—Copy presented, of Statute made by the Governing Body of All Souls College, Oxford, on 21st November, 1903, amending Statute 12^a, Clause 2, of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 89] .. 446

COAL SUPPLIES (ROYAL COMMISSION).—Copy presented, of Second Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of the Coal Resources of the United Kingdom. Vol. I., Report. Vol. II., Minutes of Evidence and Appendices. Vol. III., Supplement. Plans and Diagrams [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.. 446

INEBRIATES' ACTS (INSPECTOR'S REPORT) (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of First Report of the Inspector for Scotland, under the Inebriates' Acts, for the period to 31st December, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 446

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Church Temporalities (Ireland). Copy of the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General upon the account of the Irish Land Commission in respect of Church Temporalities in Ireland for the year ended 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 90.] 446

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

PHARMACY ACT—SUGGESTED AMENDMENT.—Question, Mr. O'Malley (Galway, Connemara); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 447

PROMOTION IN THE DUBLIN EXCISE SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 447

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 447

GERMAN INQUIRY INTO KARTELLS.—Question, Mr. Stuart Wortley (Sheffield, Hallam); Answer, Earl Percy 447

FOREIGN CRITICISMS OF BRITISH TRADE METHODS.—Question, Mr. Yerburgh (Chester); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour.. 449

INTRODUCTION OF GOVERNMENT VALUATION BILL.—Question, Mr. Luke White (Yorkshire, E.R., Buchrose); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 449

SUNDAY DEBATING SOCIETIES ON LICENSED PREMISES.—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 450

IMPRISONMENT OF A CHILD.—Question, Mr. Louis Sinclair (Essex, Romford); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 450

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL EDUCATION COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Whitmore (Chelsea); Answer, Sir William Anson 451

CHILDREN ATTENDING SCHOOLS OUTSIDE THEIR RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT.—Question, Mr. Morrell (Oxfordshire, Woodstock); Answer, Sir William Anson .. 451

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FALSE STATEMENTS (COMPANIES) BILL AND REGISTERED FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.—Question, Sir Edward Strachey (Somersetshire, E.); Answer, Sir Robert Finlay 452

SALE OF TRINITY COLLEGE ESTATES.—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 452

EXPENDITURE UNDER THE PARISH COMMITTEE SCHEME IN KERRY.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 453

FERMANAGH AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE—RELIGIOUS PERSUASION OF STAFF.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 453

DUBLIN REGISTRY OFFICE AND RECORDS OF BIRTH.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 453

CHINESE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Major Seely (Isle of Wight); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 454

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

ARMY COUNCIL—SALARIES OF MEMBERS.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield) 454

COMMITTEE OF IMPERIAL DEFENCE—STAFF CHARGES.—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Mr. Bromley Davenport 455

TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE—RECRUITING REGULATIONS.—Questions, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answers, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 455

CHINESE LABOUR IN RHODESIA.—Questions, Mr. Herbert Samuel, Mr. G. Bayley Derbyshire, Chesterfield), Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee), and Mr. Thomas Shaw (Hawick Burghs); Answers, Mr. Lyttelton, and The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 456

BOMBAY—RAILWAY COMMUNICATION WITH KARACHI.—Question, Sir John Leng (Dundee); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 457

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE—DISTRICT CORRESPONDENTS.—Question, Mr. Spear (Devonshire, Tavistock); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey) 457

ROYAL COMMISSION ON TUBERCULOSIS.—Question, Mr. Batty Langley (Sheffield, Attercliffe); Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Grant Lawson, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) 458

SCOTTISH NATIONAL GALLERY.—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) 458

JUDGE ROSS'S COURT—INSOLVENT ESTATES.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell (Longford, N.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 459

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SHANNON STEAMBOAT TRAFFIC.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 459

PIER ACCOMMODATION IN COUNTY KERRY.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 459

KILKENNY STONE INDUSTRIES AND RAILWAY RATES.—Question, Mr. Patrick O'BRIEN (Kilkenny); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 460

IRISH LANGUAGE IN NATIONAL SCHOOLS.—Questions, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.), Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 460

BELFAST POLICE AND ROMAN CATHOLIC BAZAARS.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 462

USE OF IRISH LANGUAGE IN LAW COURTS.—Questions, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell and Captain Donelan (Cork Co., E.); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 462

LONGFORD POSTMEN.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, The Postmaster General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 463

LONGFORD POST OFFICE—STATION DUTIES.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Lord Stanley 464

IRISH FOOD EXPORTS.—Questions, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.), and Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 464

SUNDAY TRAIN SERVICE FROM DUBLIN TO SLIGO.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 465

CHURCH DISCIPLINE.—Questions, Mr. Brynmor Jones (Swansea District), and Mr. Austin Taylor (Liverpool, East Toxteth); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour .. 465

STANDING COMMITTEES.—Ordered, That all Standing Committees have leave to print and circulate with the Votes the Minutes of their Proceedings and any Amended Clauses of Bills committed to them.—(*Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice.*) 467

COMMONS.—Ordered, That Mr. Crombie, Mr. Jeffreys, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, Mr. William Jones, Mr. Loyd, Mr. John Campbell, and Mr. Freeman-Thomas be Members of the Select Committee on Commons.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*) .. 467

NEW WRIT.—New Writ for Lancashire (North East Lancashire, Rossendale Division), in the room of Sir William Mather, knight (Manor of Northstead). —(*Mr. Robert Spencer.*) 467

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, " An Act to make further provision with respect to the arrangement of Polling Districts for the Election of County Councillors." [Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [Lords.]]

And, also, a Bill intituled, " An Act to amend the Law relating to the arrangement of Polling Districts in Parliamentary Boroughs." [Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [Lords.] 467

NEW BILLS.

Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill.—" To amend the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1886," presented by Mr. Leveson-Gower ; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 115.] 467

Town Holdings Bill.—" To give compensation to Occupying Tenants of Town Holdings for beneficial improvements," presented by Mr. Channing ; supported by Sir Walter Foster, Sir John Brunner, Mr. Emmott, Mr. Kearley, and Sir James Woodhouse; to be read a second time upon Friday, 18th March, and to be printed. [Bill 116.] 468

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Main Question [7th March] " That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. Guest (Plymouth) 468
Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) 472
Colonel Blundell (Lancashire, Ince) 475
Captain Norton (Newington, W.) 476
Major Evans Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) 481
Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.) 484
Mr. Peel (Manchester, S.) 489
Sir Carne Rasch (Essex, Chelmsford) 496
Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green) 499
Colonel Legge (St. George's, Hanover Square) 501
Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.) 503
Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham) 505
Major Jameson (Clare, W.) 512
Major Seely (Isle of Wight) 515
Mr. O'Mara (Kilkenny, S.) 515
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) 516
Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick) 520

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 255 ; Noes, 153. (Division List No. 45.)

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1904-5.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress. To sit again To-morrow.

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EVENING SITTING.

Parliamentary Elections (Mariners' Votes).

Sir Elliott Lees (*Birkenhead*) 523
Mr. Cathcart Wason (*Orkney and Shetland*) 531

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House is of opinion that means should be given to Seamen and Fishermen to record their Votes at Parliamentary Elections, when by reason of their calling they will be absent at sea on the day of the poll."—(*Sir Elliot Lees*).

Mr. Maconochie (*Aberdeenshire, E.*) 533
Mr. Bell (*Derby*) 534
Mr. Levy (*Leicestershire, Loughborough*) 536

Amendment proposed—

"In line 2, after the word 'fishermen' to insert the words 'railway servants and others.'"—(*Mr. Bell*).

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir Albert Rollit (*Islington, S.*) 537
Mr. Crombie (*Kincardineshire*) 538
Mr. Llewellyn (*Somersetshire, N.*) 538
Mr. Joyce (*Limerick*) 539
The Secretary to the Local Government Board (*Mr. Grant Lawson, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk*) 540
Mr. Hemphill (*Tyrone, N.*) 541
Mr. Black (*Banffshire*) 542
Mr. Reginald Lucas (*Portsmouth*) 543
Mr. William Redmond (*Clare, E.*) 543
Mr. Cumming Macdona (*Southwark, Rotherhithe*) 544
Mr. William Rutherford (*Liverpool, West Derby*) 544
Sir Frederick Banbury (*Camberwell, Peckham*) 545
Mr. Tomkinson (*Cheshire, Crewe*) 545

Question put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the words 'at sea,' and insert the words 'on duty.'"—(*Mr. Bell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The President of the Local Government Board (*Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.*) 546

Question put, and negatived.

Words "on duty" inserted.

Main Question as, amended, proposed

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Sir Frederick Banbury 547
Mr. Charles McArthur (*Liverpool, Exchange*) 549
Sir Francis Powell (*Wigan*) 549
Mr. Reginald Lucas 550
Mr. Renwick (*Newcastle-on-Tyne*) 550

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That this House is of opinion that means should be given to Seamen and Fishermen, Railway Servants, and others to record their votes at Parliamentary elections, when by reason of their calling they will be absent on duty on the day of the poll.

Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Acts Amendment Bill—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir Frederick Banbury (*Camberwell, Peckham*) 551

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed this day.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

Ordered, That the Committee of Public Accounts do consist of fifteen members

Ordered, That Sir Frederick Banbury, Mr. Blake, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Victor Cavendish, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Goddard, Sir William Brampton Gurdon, Sir Arthur Hayter, Mr. Herbert Lewis, Sir Robert Mowbray, Mr. Pym, and Mr. Yerburgh be members of the Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

IRISH VALUATION ACTS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire and report what changes in the Irish Valuation Acts are desirable in order to enable a revaluation of rateable property in any district to be made on a basis equitable to all classes of ratepayers, and to be brought into force in an effective manner.

Ordered, That Mr. Clancy, Sir John Colomb, Mr. Craig, Mr. Joseph Devlin, Mr. Douglas, Mr. Duke, Mr. Goulding, Sir James Haslett, Mr. Hemphill, Mr. Lee, Mr. Lough, Mr. William M'Killop, Mr. W. J. H. Maxwell, Mr. A. Graham Murray, and Mr. Randles be members of the Select Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 9TH MARCH, 1904.

The House met at Two of the clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time) Bill.—As amended, to be considered To-morrow 553

London Port and Docks Bill.—To be read a second time upon Tuesday, 19th April 553

METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL ORDER.—Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State under The Metropolitan Police Act, 1886, and the Metropolitan Police Courts Act, 1897, relating to lands in the parishes of Islington, Tottenham, Putney, and Woolwich, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cochrane and Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order made by one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State under The Metropolitan Police Act, 1886, and the Metropolitan Police Courts Act, 1897, relating to lands in the parishes of Islington, Tottenham, Putney, and Woolwich," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 117.] 553

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP D). MR. CREMER reported from the Committee on Group D of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Eleven o'clock; Report to lie upon the Table 553

Chippenham Gas Bill; Littlestone-on-Sea and District Water Bill; South Shields Gas Bill; South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway (Extension of Time) Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 553

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP NO. 2).

Mr. ASHTON reported from the Committee on Group No. 2 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Monday next, at Two o'clock; Report to lie upon the Table 554

PETITIONS.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES, ETC., BILL.—Petition from Glasgow, in favour; to lie upon the Table 554

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table 554

LAND VALUES TAXATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table.

Petition from Glasgow, in favour; to lie upon the Table 554

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Licences (Renewal).—Petitions against alteration of law; from Stafford (five); Rockferry; Knutsford; Liverpool; Holborn; Surbiton Park; Falfield Beaminster; Leicester (three); Bradford; Dorset; Lemington on Tyne; Brynamman; Burry Port; Whiteinch; Clangenneth; Radcliffe; Aberllefenni; Ilfracombe; Abergavenny (two); Fordwych; Pontnewynydd; Littlemoor; Cleveley; Duffield; and Marple Bridge; to lie upon the Table 554

Sale of Butter Bill.—Petitions against; from Moseley; Gravesend; Anderston; Peckham (two); Peterborough; Motherwell; Custom House; Canning Town; Rothwell; Tottenham; Maidstone; South Tottenham; Bridgeton; Poplar; Edinburgh; Ilkeston; Alfreton; Bristol (two); and Kentish Town; to lie upon the Table 554

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

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The Fiscal Policy Debate.—Question, Mr. James Lowther (Kent, Thanet); Answer, Mr. Speaker 592

NEW BILLS.

Vaccination Bill.—"To amend the Vaccination Acts," presented by Mr. Broadhurst; supported by Mr. Thomas Bayley, Sir John Rolleston, Mr. Channing, Mr. Corrie Grant, and Mr. Levy; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 23rd March, and to be printed. [Bill 118.]

Tied Houses Bill.—"To provide for the abolition of Tied Houses," presented by Mr. Broadhurst; supported by Sir John Brunner, Mr. Thomas Bayley, Mr. Herbert Lewis, and Mr. Levy; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 23rd March, and to be printed. [Bill 119.]

Irish Land Bill.—"To explain and amend Section 48 of the Irish Land Act, 1903, with respect to the payment and application of the percentage provided by the said section," presented by Mr. Wyndham; supported by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; to be read a second time upon Monday, 21st March, and to be printed. [Bill 120.]

Labourers (Ireland) Bill.

The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 593

Motion made and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the law relating to Labourers Dwellings in Ireland."—(*Mr. Wyndham*)

Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) 596

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Wyndham and Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland.

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Labourers (Ireland) Bill.—" To amend the Law relating to labourers dwellings in Ireland," presented accordingly, and read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Monday, 21st March, and to be printed. [Bill 121.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.—Motion made, and Question proposed, " That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 227,000, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at home and abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast. W.*) 599
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (*Stirling Burghs*) 608
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) 616
Mr. Fuller (*Wiltshire, Westbury*) 625
Sir Harry Seton Karr (*St. Helens*) 626
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) 628
Mr. Yerburgh (*Chester*) 631
Mr. Edmund Robertson (*Dundee*) 634
Mr. Arnold-Forster 636
Sir Edward Grey (*Northumberland, Berwick*) 639
Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 642
Captain Jessel (*St. Pancras, S.*) 643
Mr. Buchanan (*Perthshire, E.*) 645

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 217,000, be maintained for the said Service."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) 649
Mr. Arnold-Forster 651

Committee report Progress ; to sit again To-morrow.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

FISCAL POLICY.

Mr. Pirie (*Aberdeen, N.*) 652
Mr. Austen Taylor (*Liverpool, East Toxteth*) 656

Motion made, and Question put, " That this House noting the continued agitation in favour of preferential and protective tariffs, which is encouraged by the language used by certain of His Majesty's Ministers, deems it necessary to express its condemnation of any such policy."—(*Mr. Pirie.*)

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Mr. Cripps (Lancashire, Stretford) 661
Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, N.) 665
Sir John Kennaway (Devonshire, Honiton) 669
Mr. Asquith (Fifeshire, E.) 670
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 678
Lord Hugh Cecil (Greenwich) 692
Mr. Chaplin (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) 695

Question put.

The House divided: Ayes, 243; Noes, 289. (Division List, No. 46.)

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 10TH MARCH, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Bristol Tramways (Extensions) [H.L.]; Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 701

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.—Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Marylebone Chapels (Saint James, Westmoreland Street) Bill—(Petition for Bill) ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to introduce the Bill. Read, and agreed to. 701

Huddersfield Corporation Act, 1902 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.].—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee 701

St. Bartholomew's Hospital Bill [H.L.].—The Lord BALFOUR informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn 701

Appleby Corporation Gas Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments .. 701

Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee. That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 19th of February and Thursday last, discharged, and Bill committed 701

Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee that the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 19th of February and Thursday last, discharged, and Bill committed for Tuesday next 701

Barnard Castle Gas Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 19th and the 26th of February last, discharged, and Bill committed 701

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New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company Bill [H.L.].—Committee to meet on Tuesday next 702

Southend Water Bill.—Read 2^a, and committed 702

Hutchesons' Hospital and Hutchesons' Educational Trust Bill [H.L.]. Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

The Earl of Camperdown 702
The Acting Chairman of Committees (*Lord Balfour of Burleigh*) 703

Second Reading (which stands appointed for this day) put off to Thursday next.

Belfast Corporation (**Tramways**) **Bill** [H.L.].—Read 2^a (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 704

St. Bartholomew's Hospital Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^a (according to order), and committed 704

Blyth and Cowpen Gas Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1^a, and referred to the Examiners 704

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Colonies (Annual).—No. 414. Jamaica (Report for 1902–1903) 704

Loan Fund Board of Ireland.—Sixty-sixth Annual Report for 1903 704

Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900.—First Report of the Inspector for Scotland under the Inebriates Acts, for the period to 31st December, 1903 704

Education (Scotland).—General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Western Division of Scotland, for the year 1903.
Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 705

Army (Military Savings Banks).—Statement of the amount due by the public to depositors in Military Savings Banks on the 31st March, 1902, and of the receipts, interest, and disbursements in the said Military Savings Banks during the year next ensuing, ended on the 31st March, 1903, etc. 705

Assizes Acts, 1876 and 1879.—Two Orders in Council of the 7th March, 1904, relating to the ensuing Spring Assizes 705

Weights and Measures Acts, 1878 and 1889.—Order in Council of 7th March, 1904, fixing the fee for the verification and stamping of 50lb. weights 705

Extradition Acts, 1870 to 1895, and Fugitive Offenders Act, 1881.—Two Orders in Council of the 7th March, 1904, giving effect to Chapters II. and IV. of the Indian Extradition Act, 1903 705

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EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 TO 1895.—Order in Council of 7th March, 1904, directing that the Extradition Act, 1903, of the Commonwealth of Australia, shall have effect as if it were part of the "Extradition Act, 1870" 705

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890, AND MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.—Order in Council of the 7th March, 1904, declaring the port of Old Calabar to be a port of registry for British shipping 705

CHURCH TEMPORALITIES (IRELAND).—Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General upon the account of the Irish Land Commission in respect of Church Temporalities in Ireland, for the year ended 31st March, 1903, together with the account for the above period, and that from 26th July, 1869 (the date of the Irish Church Act), to 31st March, 1903.. 705

POLICE (COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS ENGLAND AND WALES).—Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary, for the year ended 29th September, 1903 706

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).—Statutory Rules and Orders, 1904, No. 274; Postal Order (New Zealand) Regulations 706

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie upon the Table.

Weights and Measures (Metric System) Bill. [H.L.].—The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be printed, but no copies to be delivered out, except to members of the Committee, and to such other persons as the Committee shall think fit, until further order. (No. 26). *Lord Rosebery and Mr. A. J. Balfour* 706

The Earl of Rosebery 706
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Lansdowne) 707
The Earl of Rosebery 710

Moved, That this House do now adjourn.—(*The Earl of Rosebery.*)

Earl Spencer 715

On Question, Motion disagreed to.

Wild Birds Protection Acts Amendment Bill.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 1.

The Marquess of Granby 716

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 6, to leave out the word 'wall.'"—(*The Marquess of Granby.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 6, to leave out from the word 'wall' to the word 'shall' in line 7, and to insert the words 'or cairn of stones or earth.'"—(*The Marquess of Granby.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 1, as Amended, agreed to.

Clause 2, agreed to.

Clause 3.

Amendment moved—

> "In Clause 3, page 1, line 18, to leave out from the word 'Protection' to the word 'and' in line 21, and to insert the words 'Acts 1880 to 1902.'"—(*The Marquess of Granby.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Bill recommitted to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 28.)

Bishopric of Bristol Bill [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to order.)

Clause 1.

The Lord Bishop of Bristol 717

Amendment moved—

> "In line 12, to leave out the word 'both,' and to insert the words 'and Falfield, all.'"—(*The Lord Bishop of Bristol.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

The Lord Bishop of Bristol 717

Amendment moved—

> "In line 12, to leave out the words, 'and for including the parishes aforesaid in the rural deanery of Hawkesbury.'"—(*The Lord Bishop of Bristol.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 1, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 2, agreed to.

Bill recommitted to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 29.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Question, Earl Spencer; Answer, The Marquess of Lansdowne 717

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 10TH MARCH, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz:—London United Tramways Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 718

Whitby Gas Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 718

Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time) Bill (BY ORDER).—Considered; to be read the third time.. 718

Barnet District Gas and Water Bill. (BY ORDER).—Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next (Evening Sitting).. 718

Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thornaby Tramways Bill.—"For conferring further powers on the Imperial Tramways Company, Limited; for constructing tramways, and widening and altering roads, and acquiring lands in the North Riding of the county of York; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 718

Sheffield, Laughton, and Maltby Railway Bill.—Order [9th February] that the Bill be committed, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 718

London County Council (General Powers) Bill.—Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills .. 718

Kettering Improvement Bill.—Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 718

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.—Petition from Hackney, in favour; to lie upon the Table 719

LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of law; from Derby; Urmston (two); Lancaster; Birmingham (two); Hammersmith; Trowbridge; Bardney; Louth; Epworth; Gwaun-le-Gurwen; Bolton; Ashton on Mersey; Dorrington; Eccles; Rowlaands Castle; Whiteinch; Fareham; Mansell Lacy; Staines; Exmouth; Wolverhampton; Ossett; London; Ovenden; Shettleston; Arbroath; Notting Hill; Christchurch; Llangollen; Boston; Belper; Great Yarmouth; Bristol; Llwynhendy; Hornchurch; Tredegarville; Market Rasen; and Belton; to lie upon the Table 719

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SALE OF BUTTER BILL.—Petitions against; from Worksop; Staines; Barking; Edmonton; Basingstoke; Hutchesontown; Lambeth; Upton Park; Bath; Brixton; Battersea (two); Kington; Southampton; Aldershot; Leominster; Edmonton; Southend; Hull (two); Leyton; Notting Hill; Spalding; Wandsworth; North Kensington; Birmingham (four); Portsmouth (two); Canterbury; Streatham; Hammersmith; High Barnet; Walthamstow; Melton Mowbray; Bristol (two); Edinburgh; Eastville; Hamilton; Harringay; Chatham; Folkestone; Bilston; Mansfield; Worcester (two); Boston; Hastings; Larkhall; Cambuslang; Coatbridge; Wishaw; Leicester; and Swindon; to lie upon the Table .. 719

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petition from Wolstanton, in favour; to lie upon the Table 719

TOWN HOLDINGS (TERMINABLE LEASES).—Petition from Blackrock, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 719

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOUR ORDINANCE).—Petition from Altrincham, for withdrawal; to lie upon the Table 719

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).—Copy presented, of Statement of the Amounts due by the Public to Depositors on 31st March, 1902, and of the Receipts, Interest, and Disbursements during the year euded 31st March, 1903, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 91] .. 720

CYPRUS.—Copy presented, of Anuual Report on Cyprus for 1902–3 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 720

POLICE (COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS, ENGLAND AND WALES).—Copy presented, of Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary for the year ended 29th September, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 92] 720

ASSIZES ACTS, 1876 AND 1879.—Copies presented, of two Orders in Council of 7th March, 1904, relating to the ensuing Spring Assizes [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 720

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890, AND MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.—Copy presented, of Order in Council of 7th March, 1904, declaring the Port of Old Calabar to be a Port of Registry for British Shipping [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 720

EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 TO 1895.—Copy presented, of Order in Council of 7th March, 1904, directing that The Extradition Act, 1903, of the Commonwealth of Australia shall have effect as if it were part of The Extradition Act, 1870 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 720

EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 TO 1895 (FUGITIVE OFFENDERS ACT, 1881).—Copies presented, of two Orders in Council of the 7th March, 1904, giving effect to Chapters II. and IV. of The Indian Extradition Act, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 720

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACTS, 1878 AND 1889.—Copy presented, of Order in Council of 7th March, 1904, fixing the fee for the verification and stamping of 50 lb. weights [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 720

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EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORTS).—Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Western Division of Scotland for the year 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 721

NAVY (GUNNERY).—Copy presented, of Results of Prize Firing in His Majesty's Fleet, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 721

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Irish Land Commission (Account). Copy of Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General upon the Account of the Irish Land Commission for the year ended 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 93.].. 721

NAVAL EXPENDITURE.—Return ordered, " of Naval Expenditure of this Country in the years 1880, 1890, 1900, 1901, 1902, and 1903, and of the Naval Expenditure of France, Russia, Germany, and America in the same years."—(*Sir Edgar Vincent.*) 721

EAST INDIA (INCOME AND EXPENDITURE).—Address for " Return of the Net Income and Expenditure of British India, under certain specified heads, for the eleven years from 1892-3 to 1902-3 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 95, of session 1903)."—(*Sir Henry Fowler.*) 721

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

INCREASED PENALTIES FOR ILLEGAL TRAWLING.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 721

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GRIEVANCES OF POSTAL EMPLOYEES—REPORT OF COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Bayley (Derbyshire, Chesterfield); Answer, Lord Stanley 722

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NEW BILLS.

Conciliation and Arbitration Act (1896) Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1896," presented by Mr. Bell; supported by Mr. Levy, Mr. Shackleton, and Mr. Crooks; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th April, and to be printed. [Bill 122].. 767

Workmen's Compensation Bill.—"To amend The Workmen's Compensation Act, 1897," presented by Mr. Bell; supported by Mr. Joseph Walton, Mr. Burt, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Tennant, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Emmott, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. Thomas Bayley, and Mr. Fenwick; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 123] 767

Vagrancy Bill.—"To amend The Vagrancy Act, 1824, and to facilitate the establishment of Labour Colonies," presented by Sir John Gorst; supported by Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Mr. Haldane, Sir Albert Rollit, Sir Frederick Carne Rasch, Sir John Leng, Colonel Williams, Captain Balfour, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Shackleton, and Mr. Crooks; to be read a second time upon Monday, 21st March, and to be printed. [Bill 124] 767

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SUPPLY [2ND ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 227,000, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 768

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 217,000, be maintained for the said Service."

Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 774
Sir James Joicey (*Durham, Chester-le-Street*) 775
Colonel Sandys (*Lancashire, Bootle*) 776
Mr. William Redmond (*Clare, E.*) 780
Lord Willoughby de Eresby (*Lincolnshire, Horncastle*) 786
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Mr. Winston Churchill (*Oldham*) 791
Captain Norton (*Newington, W.*) 791
Captain Bagot (*Westmoreland, Kendal*) 793
Mr. J. A. Pease (*Essex, Saffron Walden*) 795
General Laurie (*Pembroke, Haverfordwest*) 796
Mr. *O'Mara* (*Kilkenny, S.*) 797
Mr. Whitley (*Halifax*) 799
Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 800
Mr. Soares (*Devonshire, Barnstaple*) 802
Mr. Labouchere (*Northampton*) 802
Mr. Bond (*Nottingham, E.*) 804
Mr. Ainsworth (*Argyleshire*) 804

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 155 ; Noes, 228. (Division List 47.)

Original Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 259 ; Noes, 84. (Division List No. 48.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,746,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of His Majesty's Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

Mr. Nannetti (*Dublin, College Green*) 813

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next ; Committee also report Progress ; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

London County Council (General Powers) Bill (By Order).

Sir Edward Strachey (*Somersetshire, S.*) 814

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to insert provisions in the Bill to provide that a cow suspected of suffering from tuberculosis of the udder may be removed, and that a sample of such a cow's milk shall be submitted before slaughter to the medical officer of health for the county for bacteriological examination, and to provide, if this examination shows evidence that the cow is so diseased, that the animal shall be slaughtered in the presence of and examined by a veterinary surgeon appointed in the way proposed in Sub-section (2) of Clause 34; and to provide that if, on examination, the veterinary surgeon certifies that such cow was not suffering from tuberculosis of the udder, the council shall pay, in addition to the compensation provided for in Sub-section (3) of Clause 34, a sum not exceeding 50 per cent. of the full value of such cow immediately before slaughter, as special damages for loss of such cow; to provide that, if the veterinary surgeon certifies that the cow was so diseased, the council shall pay compensation in the manner provided by Part (a), Sub-section (3), of Section 14 of the Diseases of Animals Act, 1894, and that the council shall also bear half of the reasonable costs incurred in carrying out the purposes of Clause 34; and to provide that the value of a cow slaughtered by the council, whether diseased or not, shall be assessed by a valuer appointed by the Board of Agriculture, and not by a veterinary surgeon."—(*Sir Edward Strachey.*)

Sir Herbert Maxwell (*Wigtonshire*) 819
Mr. John Burns (*Battersea*) 820
Sir Carne Rasch (*Essex, Chelmsford*) 821
Sir Walter Foster (*Derbyshire, Ilkeston*) 822
Mr. Ernest Gray (*West Ham, N.*) 823
Mr. J. W. Lowther (*Cumberland, Penrith*) 823
Mr. Field (*Dublin, St. Patrick*) 824
Mr. Beaumont (*Northumberland, Hexham*) 824
Mr. Flavin (*Kerry, N.*) 825
Mr. Channing (*Northamptonshire, E.*) 826

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 57; Noes, 197. (Division List No. 49.)

Supply [2nd Allotted Day.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Army Estimates, 1904–5.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,746,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of His Majesty's Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of

India) (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

Mr. Nannetti 828

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Pay, etc. of General Staff) be reduced by £1,000."—(*Mr. Nannetti.*)

Mr. William Moore (*Antrim, N.*) 832
The Financial Secretary to the War Office (*Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield*) 833
Mr. Field (*Dublin, St. Patrick*) 835
Major Evans Gordon (*Tower Hamlets, Stepney*) 835
Mr. Broadhurst (*Leicester*) 835
Mr. Arnold-Forster 837

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Tomkinson (*Cheshire, Crewe*) 838
Mr. Arnold-Forster 839

Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but the Chairman withheld his assent, and declined then to put that question.

Mr. Courtenay Warner 839

Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 128; Noes, 87. (Division List No. 50.)

Question put accordingly, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,746,000, be granted to His Majesty to defray the Charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of His Majesty's Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 134; Noes, 75. (Division List No. 51.)

And, it being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

Adjourned at twenty-two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS, FRIDAY, 11TH MARCH, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Gosport Water Bill [H.L.].—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee 845

Preston and Blackburn Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Preston and Lytham Tramways and Tramroad Bill [H.L.].—Leave given to the Select Committee not to sit on Monday next until Two o'clock 845

Marylebone Chapels (St. James', Westmorland Street) Bill [H.L.].—Presented (pursuant to leave given yesterday), and read 1^{a} 845

Minehead Urban District Council Water Bill [H.L.].—The Lord BALFOUR informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The order made on the 19th of February last, discharged, and Bill committed 845

Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway Bill [H.L.]; King's College Hospital Bill [H.L.]; Great Yarmouth Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^{a} (according to order), and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 845

Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 28th of February, and 3rd of March last, discharged, and Bill committed 845

Metropolitan Railway Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table The orders made on the 22nd of February and 3rd of March last, discharged, and Bill committed for Tuesday next 845

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY (GUNNERY).—Results of prize-firing in His Majesty's Fleet, 1903. 846

CYPRUS.—Report for 1902–3.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 846

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES) VISITING COMMITTEES).—Draft Rules proposed to be made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, under the Prisons Acts, 1877 and 1898, with respect to the constitution of the Visiting Committee of—Brixton Prison; Winchester Prison.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act,) and ordered to lie on the Table .. 846

NEW BILL.

Justices of the Peace Bill[H.L.].—A Bill to amend the law relating to justices of the peace, with respect to residence, to qualification of solicitors, and to the removal of *ex-officio* justices—Was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1^{a}, to be printed, and to be read 2^{a}, on Tuesday next. (No. 30) 846

House adjourned at Twenty-five Minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 11TH MARCH, 1904.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITIONS FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—St. Marylebone Electric Lighting Bill. Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 846

Hampton-in-Arden Gas Bill.—Read the third time and passed, ... 847

Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill.—As amended, to be considered upon Monday next 847

Felixstowe Gas Bill; Gomersal Gas Bill; Wellington (Somerset) Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 847

Norwich Water Bill.—Reported, with an Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table 847

Great Northern Railway Bill.

Sir George Bartley (*Islington, N.*) 847

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.—Petition from Camberwell, in favour; to lie upon the Table 847

LICENCE HOLDERS.—Petition from Leath Ward, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table 847

LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of law: from Middlewith; Wiltshire; Shaftesbury; Galston; Wakefield; Berkeley; Monkwearmouth; North Shields; Morecambe; Thornhill; Alresford; Needham Market; Bridgwater; Hammersmith; Sheffield; Heckmondwike; Maentwog; Isaf; and Liverpool; to lie upon the Table 848

PUBLIC LIBRARIES BILL.—Petitions in favour: from Corwen; and Bristol; to lie upon the Table 848

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.—Petitions against: from Edinburgh; Clacton-on-Sea; Cheltenham; Brentford; Nottingham; Shepherd's Bush; Highbury; Islington; Herne Bay; High Wycombe; Watford; Southsea; Southwark; Richmond; Soho; and Bridgwater; to lie upon the Table 848

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES) (VISITING COMMITTEES).—Copy presented, of Draft Rules proposed to be made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department under the Prisons Acts, 1877 and 1898, with respect to the constitution of the Visiting Committee of Winchester Prison [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 94] 848

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES) (VISITING COMMITTEES).—Copy presented, of Draft Rules proposed to be made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department under the Prisons Acts, 1877 and 1898, with respect to the constitution of the Visiting Committee of Winchester Prison [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 95] 848

COAL EXPORTS, ETC.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered, 9th February; *Mr. D. A. Thomas*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 96.] .. 848

AMERICAN MAIL SERVICE.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 15th February; *Sir John Leng*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 97] 848

LEAD POISONING IN EARTHENWARE AND CHINA WORKS.—Address for "Return of the cases of Lead Poisoning reported as occurring in China and Earthenware Works during the years 1899 to 1903, showing (1) the number of cases in the several classes of works and in the various processes, the number of persons employed, and the proportion of cases to persons employed; (2) the number of cases occurring in each month of the year; (3) particulars as to the character of the attacks; (4) the number of persons suspended in certain districts by the certifying surgeons (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 102, of Session 1903)."—(*Mr. Cochrane*) 849

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—CRIME SPECIAL BRANCH.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 849

INDIA—EXCESS AMOUNT DRAWN FROM HOME CHARGES.—Question, Mr. Schwann Manchester, N.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 849

EDUCATION ACT IN WALES—FIXING OF "APPOINTED DAY."—Question, Mr. Ellis Griffith (Anglesey); Answer, Sir William Anson 850

ADULTERATED WHISKY.—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 850

SHERIFFS AS PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES.—Question, The Master of Elibank; (Edinburgh, Midlothian); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 851

PROCURATORS-FISCAL AS PARLIAMENTARY AGENTS.—Question, The Master of Elibank; Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 851

CLERKS TO COUNTY COUNCILS AND POLITICS.—Question, The Master of Elibank; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 852

LAND TAX REMISSION.—Question, Mr. Frederick Wilson (Norfolk, Mid); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 852

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India—Education in Madras.—Question Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree (Bethnal Green, N.E.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 852

Aden Protectorate Disturbances.—Question, Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 853

Irish Agricultural Department—Veterinary Branch.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 854

Antrim Lunatic Asylum—Clothing Contracts.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 854

Irish Poor Law Commission on Union Amalgamation.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 854

Labourers' Cottage Schemes in County Wicklow.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 855

Irish National Schools—Building Grants.—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 855

Asiatic Labour in Rhodesia—Proposed Referendum.—Question, Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 856

Officers as Parliamentary Candidates.—Question, The Master of Elibank; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 856

The New Rifle—Places of Manufacture.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 856

Army Discharge Regulations.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 857

New Writ.

New Writ for the Borough of Dublin (St. Stephen's Green Division), in the room of James McCann, esquire, deceased.—(*Captain Donelan.*)

Land Values (Assessment and Rating Bill)—[Second Reading].—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Trevelyan (*Yorkshire, W.R., Elland*) 857
Mr. William Rutherford (*Liverpool, West Derby*) 866

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Cripps (*Lancashire, Stretford*) 871
Mr. Remnant (*Finsbury, Holborn*) 876

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out all the words after the word 'that,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'no change in the incidence of local taxation will be satisfactory which does not recognise the unfairness of the existing charges and make further provision for the equitable contribution of all kinds of property to such taxation.'"—(*Mr. Cripps.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir Albert Rollit (*Islington, S.*) .. 881
Mr. Kearley (*Devonport*) .. 884
Mr. Field (*Dublin, St. Patrick*) .. 887
Mr. White Ridley (*Stalybridge*) .. 888
Mr. Asquith (*Fifeshire, E.*) .. 893
The Secretary to the Local Government Board (*Mr. Grant Lawson, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk*) .. 898
Mr. Lawson Walton (*Leeds, S.*) .. 905
Mr. Stock (*Liverpool, Walton*) .. 910
Sir George Bartley (*Islington, N.*) .. 911

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 223 ; Noes, 156. (Division List, No. 52.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed."

And, it being after half-past Five of the clock, and objection being taken to further proceeding, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Friday next.

NEW BILL.

TIED HOUSES (FREEING).—Bill to secure freedom for holders of licences for the sale of intoxicating liquor, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Rea, Mr. Thomson, Mr. Yoxall, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Layland-Barratt, Mr. Bell, Mr. Soares, and Mr. Rigg.

Tied Houses (Freeing) Bill.—"To secure freedom for holders of licences for the sale of intoxicating liquor," presented accordingly, and read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 125.] .. 915

Adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 14TH MARCH, 1904.

PETITION.

MARQUESS OF SLIGO.—Petition of Henry Ulick, Marquess of Sligo, Earl of Altamont, Viscount Westport of Westport, in the county of Mayo, and Baron of Monteagle, in the same county, in the Peerage of Ireland, and Baron Monteagle of Westport, in the county of Mayo, in the Peerage of the United Kingdom, claiming a right to vote at the election of Representative Peers for Ireland ; read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House .. 917

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NEW PEER.

The Right Hon. John Adrian Louis Earl of Hopetoun, K.T., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., having been created Marquess of Linlithgow, in the county of Linlithgow or West Calder, was (in the usual manner) introduced .. 917

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Young and Bell's Patents Bill [H.L.]; London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill [H.L.]; Govan Burgh (Electricity) Bill [H.L.]; Appleby Corporation Gas Bill [H.L.]; Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 917

Whitby Gas Bill; Hampden-in-Arden Gas Bill. Brought from the Commons, read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 917

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee adjourned this day at Twelve o'clock. 917

Middlesborough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thorley Tramways Bill; Bristol Tramways (Extensions) Bill [H.L.]; North Wales Electric Power Bill [H.L.]. Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next 917

Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Duke of Manchester and the Lord Barnard be proposed to the House as members of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Duke of Bedford and the Earl Fitzwilliam, and that the Lord Barnard be Chairman of the said Committee; read and agreed to 917

Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills.

Moved, " That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Thursday, the 16th day of June next. That no Provisional Order Confirmation Bill originating in this House shall be read a first time after Tuesday, the 3rd day of May next. That no Provisional Order Confirmation Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Thursday, the 16th day of June next. That when a Bill shall have passed this House with Amendments these Orders shall not apply to any new Bill sent up from the House of Commons which the Chairman of Committees shall report to the to the House is substantially the same as the Bill so amended. That this House will not receive any petition for a Private Bill later than Tuesday, the 3rd day of May next, unless such Private Bill shall have been approved by the High Court of Justice; nor any petition for a Private Bill approved by the High Court of Justice after Friday, the 6th day of May next. That this House will not receive any report from the Judges upon petitions presented to this House for Private Bills after Friday, the 6th day of May next.—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Ordered, That the said orders be printed and published, and affixed on the doors of this House and Westminster Hall. [No. 32.] 918

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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—No. 3125. Belgium (Shipping and Navigation of Antwerp); Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 919

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 9th March, 1904, declaring that Alfred W. Harman, hammerman, Royal Laboratory, War Office, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his Department 919

Treasury Minute, dated 10th March, 1904, declaring Nanking to be an unhealthy place within the meaning of the Superannuation Act, 1876 .. 919

Laid before the House [pursuant to Act], and ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

To meet To-morrow at Four o'clock. 919

NEW BILL.

Sunday Closing (Shops) Bill.—A Bill to provide for the closing of shops on Sunday—Was presented by the Lord Avebury; read 1ª; to be printed, and to be read 2ª on Tuesday, the 26th of April next. [No. 31.] 919

THE FISCAL QUESTION.

The Earl of Wemyss 919

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty praying him to appoint a small Commission to inquire into, and report upon, the present state and prospects of our trade, and whether any change of methods or other action is needed in furtherance thereof."—(*The Earl of Wemyss.*)

Earl Cowper 929
Viscount Goschen 931
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 938
Earl Spencer 944
The Earl of Wemyss 947

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 14TH MARCH, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 948

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Corbridge Gas Bill.—Kirkby-in-Ashfield Urban District Gas Bill; South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway (Extension of Time) Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time 948

Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill (BY ORDER).—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 948

Strabane, Raphoe, and Conway Railway Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 948

Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the table, and to be printed 948

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).—Ordered, That Donald Waters do attend the Committee on Group E of Private Bills to-morrow, at Twelve of the clock.. ... 948

Sheppy Gas Bill.—Sutton Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 949

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 1).—Ordered, That William Henry Stubbs, George Cook Burn, and Thomas Waite Shores do attend the Committee on Group No. 1 of the Railway Bills to-morrow, at half-past Eleven of the clock .. 949

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 1).—Ordered, That Captain W. Abbott, John Edmondson, and Robert Bond do attend the Committee on Group No. 1 of Railway Bills To-morrow, at half-past Eleven of the clock 949

Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities Bill.—Order for Second Reading upon Friday, 25th March, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 950

Bishop's Stortford and District Gas Bill.—Torquay Tramways Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 950

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Nottingham (two); Aberdare (two); Boothroyd; Ynysgan; Barton; Ryde (four); Scunthorpe; Wiltshire; Moriah Miskin; Monkwearmouth; Wrexham; Derby; Sale; Wroxall; Daubhill; Bolton (two); Kirkwall; Hindley; Islington; East Cornwall; Hammersmith; Wishaw; Lincoln; Woodstock Road; and Rendham; to lie upon the Table 950

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE.—Petitions for extension to women; from Draycott; West Bristol; and Bristol; to lie upon the Table 950

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.—Petitions against; from Brentwood; Lincoln; Redditch; Chelmsford; Chichester; and Rotherham; to lie upon the Table.. 950

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petition from Haggerston, in favour, to lie upon the Table 950

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOUR ORDINANCE).—Petition from Claylands, for withdrawal; to lie upon the Table 950

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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SUPERANNUATION ACTS, 1859 AND 1876.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 10th March, 1904, declaring Nanking to be an unhealthy place within the meaning of the Superannuation Act, 1876 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 950

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 9th March, 1904, declaring that Alfred W. Harman, Hammerman, Royal Laboratory, War Office, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 951

NAVAL WORKS ACTS, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1899, AND 1901.—Account presented, showing the amount of Money issued out of the Consolidated Fund; the amount and nature of the Securities created in respect thereof; the amount of the surplus of Income over Expenditure for the financial year ended 31st March, 1896, and the amount of Money expended in pursuance of the Acts during the year ended the 31st March, 1903; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 98.] 951

PUBLIC OFFICES (ACQUISITION OF SITE) ACT, 1895, SESSION 2; PUBLIC OFFICES (WESTMINSTER) SITE ACT, 1896; PUBLIC OFFICES (WHITEHALL) SITE ACT, 1897; AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS EXPENSES ACT, 1898.—Account presented, showing the moneys issued out of the Consolidated Fund, the moneys borrowed and the securities created in respect thereof, the disposal of moneys issued on the National Debt Commissioners for temporary investment, and the expenditure, under the provisions of the Acts, to the 31st March, 1903; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 99.] 951

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 3125 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 951

TELEGRAPH (MONEY).—Committee to consider of authorising the issue,, out of the Consolidated Fund, of sums for the purpose of the Telegraph Acts, 1863 to 1899 (King's Recommendation signified) to-morrow.—(*Lord Stanley.*) .. 951

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

KILMUIR ESTATE, ISLE OF SKYE.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 952

COUNTY CLERKS AS POLITICAL AGENTS.—Question, The Master of Elibank (Edinburgh, Midlothian); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 952

CROWN FISHING RIGHTS IN ORKNEY.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 952

INCOME TAX COLLECTION—ASSIMILATION OF ENGLISH AND SCOTCH SYSTEMS.—Question, Sir J. Stirling Maxwell (Glasgow, College); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 953

INCOME TAX COMMITTEE AND THE GRIEVANCES OF CLERKS TO SURVEYORS OF TAXES.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 953

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CHINESE WAR INDEMNITY.—Question, Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 954

TROUT FISHING IN LOCH NESS.—Question, Mr. John Dewar (Inverness); Answer Mr. A. Graham Murray 954

PORTERAGE OF TELEGRAMS.—Question, Mr. Rigg (Westmoreland, Appleby); Answer, Lord Stanley 955

SICK LEAVE IN BELFAST POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer Lord Stanley 955

BELFAST SORTING OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Lord Stanley .. 955

FARMERS' CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES—TRANSLATION INTO WELSH OF BOARD OF AGRICULTURE LEAFLET.—Question Mr. Lloyd-Morgan (Carmarthenshire, W.) Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 956

NAVAL RESERVE MEN AND THE MERCHANT SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Crooks (Woolwich); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 956

REPORT OF TORPEDO BOAT DESTROYERS COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Yerburgh (Chester); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 958

KING'S SCHOLARSHIP EXAMINATION.—Question, Mr. Henry Hobhouse (Somersetshire, E.); Answer, Sir William Anson 958

EXPORTS OF INDIAN AND CEYLON TEAS INTO RUSSIA.—Question, Sir Edward Sassoon (Hythe); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 959

MADRAS PRESIDENCY COLLEGE—PROFESSORSHIP OF BIOLOGY.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 959

SALARIES OF IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 960

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—PUBLICATION IN CONSTABULARY GAZETTE OF EVIDENCE OF AN INQUIRY.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 961

IRELAND—RETURN OF SCHEME OF COTTAGES.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 961

PAYMENT OF TEMPORARY MEDICAL OFFICERS IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Jordan (Fermanagh, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 962

FUTURE OF THE VOLUNTEER FORCE—REPORT OF ROYAL COMMISSION.—Question, Mr. Moon (St. Pancras, N.); Answer, Mr. Arnold Foster 963

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MILITIA, YEOMANRY, AND VOLUNTEERS—COST PER HEAD.—Question, Mr. Yerburgh; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 964

RECOMMENDATION OF MINERS' PHTHISIS COMMISSION IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Mr. Haldane (Haddingtonshire); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton .. 963

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REGULATIONS FOR LANDING OF BRITISH SUBJECTS AT BEIRA.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 965

INDENTURED EAST INDIAN IMMIGRANTS IN THE COLONIES.—Question, Mr. Grenfell (Bucks, Wycombe); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 966

GOVERNMENT SANCTION OF TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE.—Question, Mr. John Ellis; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 966

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RE-INTRODUCTION OF BILLS OF EXCHANGE AMENDMENT BILL.—Question, Sir F. Dixon Hartland (Middlesex, Uxbridge); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour .. 967

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON PARLIAMENTARY GRANT FOR METEOROLOGY.—Question, Mr. Frederick Wilson (Norfolk, Mid); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 967

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WAR OFFICE EMPLOYEES AND THE VENTILATION OF GRIEVANCES.—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 967

DUKE OF YORK'S SCHOOL.—Question, Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 968

DIRECTOR OF ARMY CONTRACTS.—Questions, Mr. Lambert and Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 968

ADMIRALTY GRANTS TO SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCHES.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) 970

ROSYTH.—Question, Mr. Black (Banffshire); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 970

ADMIRALTY GRANTS TO NONCONFORMIST BODIES.—Question, Mr. Alfred Davies (Carmarthen Boroughs); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 970

COALING WARSHIPS AT SEA.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Pretyman .. 971

AUSTRALIAN LABOUR LAWS.—Question, Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 971

CHINESE LABOURERS AND RIGHTS OF PROPERTY IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 972

NATIVE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL MINES.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 972

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Post Office and the Cash-on-Delivery System.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid); Answer, The Postmaster General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 974

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Disease caused by Milk at Finchley.—Question, Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 976

Frozen Meat and Cancer.—Question, Mr. Alfred Davies; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 977

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Electric Lamp Brackets in the Mall.—Questions, Major Evans Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney), and Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.); Answers, Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 979

Girls' Public Day School Company, Limited.—Question, Sir George Bartley; Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 980

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Education Act—Provision of New Denominational Schools.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts; Answer, Sir William Anson 981

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LAND PURCHASE IN CASTLEREA.—Question, Mr. Hayden; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 984

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IRISH MODEL SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 986

BUTSON ESTATE, CO. GALWAY.—Questions, Mr. Roche (Galway, E.). and Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 986

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES IN IRISH TOWNS.—Question, Mr. John Redmond; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 987

IRISH DEVELOPMENT GRANT.—Question, Mr. John Redmond; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 987

BODYKE LICENSING.—Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 988

IRISH SALMON FISHERIES.—Question, Mr. Sheehy (Meath, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 988

ATHENRY CASE.—Question, Mr. Roche; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 989

MARLBOROUGH STREET TRAINING SCHOOL.—Question, Sir James Haslett (Belfast, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 989

LIMERICK COTTAGE SCHEME LOANS.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 990

FAIR RENTS IN KILDARE.—Question, Mr. Kilbride (Kildare, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 990

OWENMORE RIVER DRAINAGE.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 991

ENNISKILLEN FAIR GREEN.—Question, Mr. Edward Mitchell (Fermanagh, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 991

MOTOR TRAFFIC IN COUNTY FERMANAGH.—Question, Mr. Edward Mitchell; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 992

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DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL AND THE MARINE WORKS ACT.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 992

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CONFIDENTIAL CABINET MEMORANDUM.—Questions, Mr. D. A. Thomas, Mr. Lambert, Mr. John Ellis (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield), and Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answers, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 995

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THE TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE.—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 998

NEW BILLS.

Prisons (Scotland) Bill.—" To amend the Law relating to Prisons in Scotland by abolishing the distinction between general Prisons and ordinary Prisons," presented by Mr. A. Graham Murray; supported by the Lord Advocate; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 126.] 1000

Teinds (Scotland) Bill.—" To amend the Law of Teinds, and to abolish Fiars Prices in Scotland," presented by Mr. Maxwell; supported by Sir Charles Renshaw, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Gordon, and Sir John Stirling-Maxwell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 127.]

SUPPLY [3RD ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1904-5. (VOTE ON ACCOUNT.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £21,500,000, be granted to His Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charges for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905, viz. :—

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS IV.	£
Board of Education	7,000,000

CLASS I.	
Royal Palaces and Marlborough House	26,000
Osborne	10,000
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens	35,000
Houses of Parliament Buildings	16,000
Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain	30,000
Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain	15,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings	20,000
Revenue Buildings	160,000
Public Buildings, Great Britain	160,000
Surveys of the United Kingdom	90,000
Harbours under the Board of Trade	10,000
Peterhead Harbour	10,000
Rates on Government Property	260,000
Public Works and Buildings, Ireland	110,000
Railways, Ireland	60,000

CLASS II.

United Kingdom and England :—

House of Lords Offices	6,000
House of Commons Offices	12,000
Treasury and Subordinate Departments	40,000
Home Office	60,000
Foreign Office	30,000
Colonial Office	25,000
Privy Council Office, etc.	4,000
Board of Trade	75,000
Mercantile Marine Services	30,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade	3
Board of Agriculture	65,000
Charity Commission	15,000
Civil Service Commission	18,000
Exchequer and Audit Department	25,000
Friendly Societies Registry	3,000
Local Government Board	85,000
Lunacy Commission	5,000
Mint (including Coinage)	5
National Debt Office	6,000
Public Record Office	10,000
Public Works Loan Commission	5
Registrar General's Office	18,000
Stationery and Printing	340,000
Woods, Forests, etc., Office of	8,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	30,000
Secret Service	40,000

Scotland :—

	£
Secretary for Scotland	25,000
Fishery Board	8,000
Lunacy Commission	3,000
Registrar General's Office	2,000
Local Government Board	5,000

Ireland :—

Lord Lieutenant's Household	2,000
Chief Secretary for Ireland	12,000
Department of Agriculture	80,000
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	1,000
Local Government Board	25,000
Public Record Office	2,000
Public Works Office	18,000
Registrar General's Office	6,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey	7,000

CLASS III.

United Kingdom and England :—

Law Charges	45,000
Miscellaneous Legal Expenses	28,000
Supreme Court of Judicature	140,000
Land Registry	18,000
County Courts	4,000
Police, England and Wales	17,000
Prisons, England and the Colonies	360,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	140,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum	14,000

Scotland :—

Law Charges and Courts of Law	30,000
Register House, Edinburgh	15,000
Crofters Commission, Scotland	2,000
Prisons, Scotland	38,000

Ireland :—

Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions	32,000
Supreme Court of Judicature, and other Legal Departments	43,000
Land Commission	55,000
County Court Officers, etc.	45,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police	60,000
Royal Irish Constabulary	600,000
Prisons, Ireland	50,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools	55,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum	3,000

CLASS IV.

United Kingdom and England :—

British Museum	80,000
National Gallery	10,000
National Portrait Gallery	3,000

	£
Wallace Collection	3,000
Scientific Investigation, etc., United Kingdom	22,000
Universities and Colleges, Great Britain, and Intermediate Education, Wales	48,000
Scotland :—	
Public Education	750,000
National Gallery	5,000
Ireland :—	
Public Education	760,000
Endowed Schools Commissioners	400
National Gallery	2,500
Queen's Colleges	2,500

CLASS V.

Diplomatic and Consular Services	250,000
Uganda and East Africa Protectorates, and Uganda Railway	300,000
Colonial Services	340,000
Telegraph Subsidies and Pacific Cable	35,000

CLASS VI.

Superannuation and Retired Allowances	300,000
Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, etc.	2,000
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances	1,000
Hospitals and Charities, Ireland	17,000

CLASS VII.

Temporary Commissions	25,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	17,587
Repayments to the Local Loans Fund	-
St. Louis Exhibition, 1904	60,000
Ireland Development Grant	184,000
Total for Civil Services	14,170,000

	£
Revenue Departments :—	
Customs	350,000
Inland Revenue	830,000
Post Office	3,800,000
Post Office Packet Service	250,000
Post Office Telegraphs	2,100,000
Total for Revenue Departments	7,330,000
Grand Total	21,500,000

Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon Boroughs) 1004

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Class 4 (Board of Education), be reduced by £500."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

Mr. Haldane (Haddingtonshire) 1015
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 1020
Sir Edward Grey (Northumberland, Berwick) 1028
Sir W. Hart Dyke (Kent, Dartford) 1033
Mr. Abel Thomas (Carmarthenshire, E.) 1037
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 1040
Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.) 1041
The Attorney-General (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs) 1048
Sir Michael Foster (London University) 1052
Mr. Griffith Boscawen (Kent, Tonbridge) 1054
Mr. Humphreys-Owen (Montgomeryshire) 1058

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

Supply [3rd Allotted Day].

Considered in the Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Civil Services and Revenue Departments Estimates, 1904–5. (Vote on Account).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £21,500,000, be granted to His Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charges for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905, viz. :—

Civil Services.

Class IV.	£
Board of Education	7,000,000
Class I.	
Royal Palaces and Marlborough House	26,000
Osborne	10,000
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens	35,000
Houses of Parliament Buildings	16,000
Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain	30,000
Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain	15,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings	20,000
Revenue Buildings	160,000
Public Buildings, Great Britain	160,000
Surveys of the United Kingdom	90,000
Harbours under the Board of Trade	10,000
Peterhead Harbour	10,000
Rates on Government Property	260,000
Public Works and Buildings, Ireland	110,000
Railways, Ireland	60,000

CLASS II.

United Kingdom and England :—

	£
House of Lords Offices	6,000
House of Commons Offices	12,000
Treasury and Subordinate Departments	40,000
Home Office	60,000
Foreign Office	30,000
Colonial Office	25,000
Privy Council Office, etc.	4,000
Board of Trade	75,000
Mercantile Marine Services	30,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade	3
Board of Agriculture	65,000
Charity Commission	15,000
Civil Service Commission	18,000
Exchequer and Audit Department	25,000
Friendly Societies Registry	3,000
Local Government Board	85,000
Lunacy Commission	5,000
Mint (including Coinage)	5
National Debt Office	6,000
Public Record Office	10,000
Public Works Loan Commission	5
Registrar General's Office	18,000
Stationery and Printing	340,000
Woods, Forests, etc., Office of	8,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	30,000
Secret Service	40,000

Scotland :—

Secretary for Scotland	25,000
Fishery Board	8,000
Lunacy Commission	3,000
Registrar General's Office	2,000
Local Government Board	5,000

Ireland :—

Lord-Lieutenant's Household	2,000
Chief Secretary for Ireland	12,000
Department of Agriculture	80,000
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	1,000
Local Government Board	25,000
Public Record Office	2,000
Public Works Office	18,000
Registrar General's Office	6,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey	7,000

CLASS III.

United Kingdom and England :—

Law Charges	45,000
Miscellaneous Legal Expenses	28,000
Supreme Court of Judicature	140,000
Land Registry	18,000
County Courts	4,000

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	£
Police, England and Wales	17,000
Prisons, England and the Colonies	360,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	140,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum	14,000
Scotland :—	
Law Charges and Courts of Law	30,000
Register House, Edinburgh	15,000
Crofters Commission, Scotland	2,000
Prisons, Scotland	38,000
Ireland :—	
Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions	32,000
Supreme Court of Judicature, and other Legal Departments	43,000
Land Commission	55,000
County Court Officers, etc.	45,000
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Scotland :—	
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CLASS VII.

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Temporary Commissions	25,000
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Repayments to the Local Loans Fund	—
St. Louis Exhibition, 1904	60,000
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Total for Civil Services	14,170,000
REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.	
Customs	350,000
Inland Revenue	830,000
Post Office	3,800,000
Post Office Packet Service	250,000
Post Office Telegraphs	2,100,000
Total for Revenue Departments	7,330,000
Grand Total	£21,500,000

Motion made and Question proposed, "That, Item, Class 4 (Board of Education), be reduced by £500."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

Mr. Humphreys-Owen 1062
Mr. George Kenyon (*Denbigh*) 1064
Mr. Bamford Slack (*Hertfordshire, St. Albans*) 1067
Lord Hugh Cecil (*Greenwich*) 1070
Mr. Bryce (*Aberdeen, S.*) 1077
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) 1084
Mr. Alfred Davies (*Carmarthen Boroughs*) 1096

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 128 ; Noes, 248. (Division List No. 53).

And, it being after Midnight, the Chairman proceeded, in pursuance of Standing Order 15, to put the Question necessary to dispose of the Vote.

Original Question put and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported upon Wednesday ; Committee to sit again to-morrow.

Adjourned at twelve minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS : TUESDAY, 15TH MARCH, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—

Blyth and Cowpen Gas.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table 1101

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Ipswich Dock Commission Bill [H.L.]; Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas Bill [H.L.]; New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Extension of Time, etc.) Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments 1101

Preston and Lytham Tramways and Tramroad Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1101

Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1101

Marylebone Chapels (St. James', Westmoreland Street) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª. 1101

Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1101

Site for Duke of York's School Bill [H.L.]. Committed 1101

Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time) Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1ª, and referred to the Examiners 1101

Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Northesk be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Harrowby; read, and agreed to .. 1101

PETITIONS.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES (METRIC SYSTEM) BILL [H.L.]. Petition in favour of; of the magistrates as the local authority of Glasgow; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1102

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—No. 3126. Greece (Finances for 1903.); No. 3127. China (Trade of Tientsin for 1900–1903).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table. 1102

Wild Birds Protection Acts Amendment Bill; Bishopric of Bristol Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Standing Committee without further Amendment. The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House to be received on Thursday next 1102

Justices of the Peace Bill [H.L.]. [SECOND READING].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read

The Lord Chancellor (The Earl of Halsbury) 1102

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Earl Spencer 1103

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Prevention of Cruelty to Children (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]—[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Alverstone 1104

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*Lord Alverstone.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

BRITISH FORESTRY.

Lord Barnard 1105
The President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (The Earl of Onslow) 1108
Lord Avebury 1111
The Marquess of Granby 1112
Lord Reay 1113
The Earl of Powis 1115
The Earl of Onslow 1117

The House adjourned at twenty minutes past Five o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 15TH MARCH, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

London United Tramways Bill.—Read a second time, and committed .. 1117

Bexhill Water and Gas Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed

STANDING ORDERS—

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee.

1. "That, in the case of the St. Marylebone Electric Lighting Bill, Petition for Additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional Provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

2. "That, in the case of the Marylebone Chapels (St. James', Westmoreland Street) Bill [Lords]. the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

3. "That, in the case of the Acton Improvement Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of the Brentford Gas Company, against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

Resolutions agreed to 1117

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North Staffordshire Railway Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1118

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 1).—Mr. KIMBER reported from the Committee on Group No. 1 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Thursday, at half-past Eleven of the clock. Report to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 4).—Ordered, That Superintendent Horace J. Bantick do attend the Committee on Group No. 4 of Railway Bills To-morrow, at half-past Eleven of the clock 1118

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act for rendering valid certain Letters Patent granted to William Young and Alexander Bell in respect of an invention for Improvements in the decomposition of mineral oils for the production of illuminating gas, and to William Young in respect of Inventions (1) for Improvements in the production of illuminating gas from mineral oils and in apparatus therefor and for producing water gas and (2) for Improvements in the production of illuminating gas and bye-products from liquid hydrocarbons and in apparatus therefor." [Young and Bell's Patents Bill [Lords.]]

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to enable the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company to raise further capital." [London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill [Lords.]]

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the Provost, Magistrates, and Councillors of the Burgh of Govan in connection with their electricity undertaking; and for other purposes." [Govan Burgh (Electricity) Bill [Lords.]]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Corporation of Appleby to purchase the undertaking of the Appleby Gas Light and Coal Company, and to supply gas within the borough; and for other purposes." [Appleby Corporation Gas Bill [Lords.]] 1118

Young and Bell's Patent Bill [LORDS]; London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill [Lords]; Govan Burgh (Electricity) Bill [Lords]; Appleby Corporation Gas Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1119

PETITIONS.

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Falkirk, against; to lie upon the Table 1119

LAND VALUES (TAXATION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Falkirk, against; to lie upon the Table 1119

LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from South Durham; Kiveton Park; Devonport; Llangarnech; St. Ives; North Finchley; Bingley; Hyde; Bishop's Stortford; Failsworth; Willesden; Gloucester; Warrington; Moss Side; Manchester (four); Middlesbrough; Doncaster; Cheetham Hill; Crumpsall; Litlington; Croydon; Llanbadarn (two); Bala; Kennington Park; Hereford; Kington; Skegness; and Cinderford; to lie upon the Table. 1119

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PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE.—Petition from Wrington, for extension to women; to lie upon the Table 1120

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.—Petitions against; from Gloucester; Hove; Brighton; and Salisbury; to lie upon the Table 1120

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOUR ORDINANCE).—Petition from Donside, for withdrawal; to lie upon the Table 1120

VIVISECTION.—Petition from Bristol, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table .. 1120

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY (DOCKYARD EXPENSE ACCOUNTS, 1902–3).—Annual Accounts presented, for 1902–3, of Shipbuilding and Dockyard Transactions, etc., with Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 100] 1120

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Return of the Areas, Population, and valuation of Counties, Burghs, and Parishes in Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1120

RAILWAYS ABANDONMENT.—Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting the West Metropolitan Railway (Abandonment) Bill and the objects thereof [pursuant to Standing Order 158B]; referred to the Committee on the Bill 1120

HARBOUR, ETC., BILLS (HUMBER COMMERCIAL RAILWAY AND DOCK BILL).—Copy ordered, "of Report of the Board of Trade on the Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 101] 1121

MAGISTRACY (IRELAND).—Copy ordered, "of Correspondence between the Lord Chancellor of Ireland and Mr. Thomas M'Donagh, J.P., since the 3rd day of September, 1903."—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 102.] 1121

ALIENS.—Address for "Return showing the names of all Aliens to whom certificates of naturalisation have been issued, and who have taken the oath of allegiance, between the 1st day of January, 1903, and the 31st day of December, 1903, giving the country and place of residence of the person naturalised, and including information as to Aliens who have, during the same period, obtained Acts of Naturalisation from the Legislature (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 86, of Session 1903)."—(*Mr. Cochrane.*) 1121

SUGAR DUTIES.—Return ordered, "showing the weight entered for home consumption at each degree of the polariscopic scale and the gross revenue received thereon since the re-imposition of the sugar duties in each month of the calendar year, with the total for each year and the average gross duty received per cwt. of sugar, the number of analyses made, and the total cost to the revenue of analysing the imports of sugar."—(*Mr. Lough*) 1121

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

VOLUNTEER ACTIVE SERVICE COMPANIES—OFFICERS AND ARMY RANK.—Question, Sir Lees Knowles (Salford, W.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster .. 1121

COTTAGE HOMES BILL.—Question, Mr. John Hutton (Yorkshire, Richmond); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1122

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES—REPAYMENT OF LOANS BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1123

PARCELS POST—CASH ON DELIVERY SYSTEM.—Question, Sir John Rolleston (Leicester); Answer, Lord Stanley 1123

CARRIAGE OF MAILS AT DUNGLOE, COUNTY DONEGAL.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1124

PROMOTION IN THE INLAND REVENUE (EXCISE BRANCH).—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1124

PROMOTION OF SENIOR ASSISTANT CLERKS, ABSTRACTOR CLASS.—Question, Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1124

PENSIONS OF ASSISTANT CLERKS, ABSTRACTOR CLASS, COMPULSORILY RETIRED.—Question, Mr. Yoxall; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1125

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—VOTES ON ACCOUNT.—Question, Sir Brampton Gurdon (Norfolk, N.); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1125

FEES TO MEDICAL WITNESSES IN METROPOLITAN POLICE COURTS.—Question, Dr. Rutherford-Harris (Camberwell, Dulwich); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 1126

NATIVE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL—COMMISSION FOR RECRUITING IN CENTRAL AFRICA.—Question, Sir Brampton Gurdon; Answer, Earl Percy 1127

PAYMENT OF TEMPORARY MEDICAL OFFICER AT ENNISKILLEN.—Question, Mr. Jordan (Fermanagh, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1128

PREPARATION OF JURORS' AND VOTERS' LISTS BY CLERKS OF UNIONS.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1129

THE LICENSING BILL.—Question, Mr. Samuel Roberts (Sheffield, Ecclesall); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1129

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

VOLUNTEER ACTIVE SERVICE COMPANIES—OFFICERS AND ARMY RANK.—Question, Sir Lees Knowles (Salford, W.); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield) 1129

WELSH SMOKELESS COAL.—Question, Sir Lees Knowles; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) 1130

WEST INDIAN EXPORTS.—Question, Mr. Brigg (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 1131

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TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE.—Questions, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 1131

GOVERNMENT SANCTION TO THE TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE.—Questions, Major Seely (Isle of Wight) and Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answers, Mr. Lyttelton 1132

TRANSVAAL OPINION ON THE LABOUR ORDINANCE.—Question, Major Seely; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1132

WHITE LABOUR FOR GOLD MINING.—Questions, Major Seely and Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar); Answers, Mr. Lyttelton 1133

QUEBEC LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AND IRISH HOME RULE.—Questions, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway) and Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answers, Mr. Lyttelton 1134

CONVICTS IN SOUTH AFRICAN MINES.—Question, Mr. Levy (Leicestershire, Loughborough); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1134

WHISKY ADULTERATION.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 1134

CANADIAN PIG-IRON.—Question, Sir Charles McLaren (Leicestershire, Bosworth) and Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1134

INCOME TAX ON BANK DIVIDENDS.—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1135

EAST AFRICAN TRADE—STEAMER SUBSIDIES.—Question, Mr. Nussey (Ponefract); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.) 1136

OVERCROWDING ON LONDON RAILWAYS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1136

RETURN RAILWAY TICKETS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1137

ROYAL COMMISSION ON TRADE DISPUTES.—Questions, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); and Mr. Shackleton (Lancashire, Clitheroe); Answers, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) 1137

HIGHLAND CROFTERS—SUPPLY OF SEED OATS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) 1138

IRISH DEVELOPMENT GRANT—NATIONAL SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS.—Question, Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1138

IRISH LAND JUDGES COURT.—Question, Mr. T. W Russell (Tyrone, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1138

CONGESTION IN CASTLEBAR.—Question, Dr. Ambrose (Mayo, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1139

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SLIGO MOTOR SERVICE.—Question, Mr. William McKillop (Sligo, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1139

MR. P. CHEVENIX FRENCH.—Question, Mr. P. A. McHugh (Leitrim, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1139

EYRECOURT CONVENT SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Roche (Galway, E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1140

IRISH DEVELOPMENT GRANT.—Question, Mr. Clancy (Dublin Co., N.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1140

ST. PATRICK'S DAY.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey) 1141

NEW BILL.

Merchant Shipping Bill.—"To amend The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894," presented by Mr. Runciman; supported by Sir Charles Cayzer, Sir Robert Ropner, Mr. Russell Rea, Colonel Denny, and Mr. Austin Taylor; to be read a second time upon Monday, 16th May, and to be printed. [Bill 128.] 1141

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee).

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1903-4.—CLASS IV.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £29,500, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Expenses of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland."

Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 1142

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £29,400, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Wyndham, Dover*) 1143
Mr. John Redmond 1144

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 141; Noes, 130. (Division List No. 54.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) 1147
Mr. J. F. Hope (*Sheffield, Brightside*) 1148
Mr. Dalziel (*Kirkcaldy Burghs*) 1149
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 1149

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 146 ; Noes, 171. (Division List No. 55.)

CLASS VI.

2. £197,677 (Supplementary), Savings Banks' and Friendly Societies' Deficiencies.

Sir Albert Rollit (*Islington, S.*) 1153
Mr. Yoxall (*Nottingham, W.*) 1159
Sir George Bartley (*Islington, N.*) 1161
Mr. John Ellis (*Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe*) 1163
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Austin Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.*) 1164
Sir M. Hicks Beach (*Bristol, W.*) 1173
Mr. Sydney Buxton (*Tower Hamlets, Poplar*) 1175
Mr. Brigg (*Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley*) 1176
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 1177
Mr. Buchanan (*Perthshire, E.*) 1179
Sir Frederick Banbury (*Camberwell, Peckham*) 1181
Mr. Ainsworth (*Argyll*) 1181
Sir Edgar Vincent (*Exeter*) 1181
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) 1182

Resolutions to be reported upon Thursday ; Committee to sit again tomorrow.

SUPPLY [25TH FEBRUARY.]

Resolution reported.

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES. 1903–4.

" That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,700,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Additional Expenditure, in respect of the following Army Services, viz. :—

Vote 1. Pay, &c., of the Army - - - - - -	£2,000,000
Vote 6. Transport and Remounts - - - - -	2,100,000
Vote 7. Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies - - -	2,030,000
Total - - - - - - - -	£6,130,000
Excess Appropriations in Aid (Votes 1, 6, 7, 9, and 10) - -	3,430,000
	£2,700,000

Resolution read a second time.

Mr. McCrae (*Edinburgh, E.*) 1184

Amendment proposed—

" To leave out '£2,700,000,' and insert '£1,800,000.' "—(*Mr. McCrae.*)

Question proposed "That '£2,700,000' stand part of the said Resolution."

The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield) .. 1185
Mr. Whitley (Halifax) .. 1186
Mr. Courtenay Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) .. 1188
Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham) .. 1189
Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.) .. 1190
The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) .. 1191
Mr. Ritchie (Croydon) .. 1192
Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) .. 1193
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) .. 1195
Sir Joseph Leese (Lancashire, Accrington) .. 1196
Mr. Ainsworth (Argyll) .. 1197
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) .. 1197
Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) .. 1200
Mr. Toulmin (Lancashire, Bury) .. 1203

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 226 ; Noes, 128. (Division List No. 56.)

Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

St. Marylebone Electric Lighting Bill (BY ORDER).

Mr. Goddard (Ipswich) .. 1205
Mr. Kimber (Wandsworth) .. 1206

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to insert provisions in the Bill to the effect that the council shall, once in every year after the first year's working of the electric lighting undertaking, cause to be laid before them a statement and balance-sheet of the accounts of the electric lighting undertaking drawn up in accordance with the form of accounts prescribed by the Board of Trade for a local authority under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, and the council shall thereupon fix annually the charges to be made for the supply of electrical energy in the then ensuing year at such rates (not exceeding the maximum rates specified in the Order of 1901) so that so far as is reasonably practicable, the revenue for that year shall not be less than the estimated amount of the expenditure and of the charges for interest and sinking fund for that year."—(*Mr. Goddard*).

Mr. Boulnois (Marylebone, E.) .. 1208
Mr. Moulton (Cornwall, Launceston) .. 1209
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars) .. 1211
Mr. John Burns (Battersea) .. 1211

Question put, and negatived.

TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

Mr. Henry Hobhouse 1212
Sir Michael Foster (London University) 1217

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Training of Teachers is a matter of national concern, and the cost of such training, so far as it falls on public funds, should be charged on the national exchequer."—(*Mr. Henry Hobhouse.*)

Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.) 1218
Mr. George White (Norfolk, N.W.) 1222

Amendment proposed—

"In line 2, to insert after the word 'and' the words 'the greater part of.'"—(*Dr. Macnamara.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 1225
Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.) 1229
Mr. Charles Allen (Gloucestershire, Stroud) 1231
Sir William Hart Dyke (Kent, Dartford) 1232
Sir E. Durning-Lawrence (Cornwall, Truro) 1233
Mr. Spear (Devonshire, Tavistock) 1233
Mr. Brigg (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley) 1234
Mr. Talbot (Oxford University) 1235

Amendment put, and agreed to.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, the Training of Teachers is a matter of national concern, and the greater part of the cost of such training, so far as it falls on public funds, should be charged on the National Exchequer.

School Board Electorate (Scotland) Bill.—[SECOND READING.]—Order for Second Reading, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday next.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 16TH MARCH, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Littlestone-on-Sea and District Water Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1237

PETITIONS.

Licensed Premises (Hours of Closing).—Petition from Woolwich, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table .. 1237

Licences (Renewal).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Aberdeen; Upton Cross; Bridge of Weir; Grantham; Ysbytty Ifan; Pontygwaith; Derby; Dean Row; Boston; Llanelly; Treherbert; Styal; Ferndale; Cardiff; Bethania; Merthyr Fall; Llantwit Vardre; Gyffylliog; Falmouth; Hove; Cheadle; St. Albans; Machen; and Birmingham; to lie upon the Table .. 1237

Parliamentary Franchise.—Petitions for extension to women; from Cradley Heath; and Leicester; to lie upon the Table .. 1237

Sale of Butter Bill.—Petitions against; from Stratford; Canton; Cardiff; Glasgow (four); Coventry; and Hull; to lie upon the Table .. 1237

Savings Banks Acts Amendment Bill.—Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table .. 1237

Transvaal (Chinese Labour Ordinance).—Petition from Shanklin, for withdrawal; to lie upon the Table .. 1237

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Factory and Workshop (Flax and Linen Mills).—Copy presented, of Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Commander H. P. Smith, one of His Majesty's Superintending Inspectors of Factories, upon the conditions of work in Flax and Linen Mills as affecting the health of the operatives employed therein [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 1238

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3126 and 3127 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 1238

Colonial Reports (Annual).—Copy presented, of Colonial Report, No. 414 (Jamaica, Report for 1902–3) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 1238

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Accounts of General Lighthouse Fund.—Question, Sir John Leng (Dundee); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour .. 1238

London County Council Electorate.—Question, Mr. H. C. Richards (Finsbury, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long .. 1239

Aid Grants for Scotch Schools.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray .. 1293

Shanghai and Nanking Railway.—Question, Mr. Baird (Glasgow, Central); Answer, Earl Percy .. 1239

Foreign Ministries of Commerce.—Question, Mr. Louis Sinclair (Essex, Romford); Answer, Earl Percy .. 1240

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POSTAL CASH-ON-DELIVERY SYSTEM.—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton (Canterbury); Answer, Lord Stanley 1240

DUTIES OF TELEGRAPHISTS AT LEEDS.—Question, Mr. Barran (Leeds, N.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1241

SEA CARRIAGE OF GRAIN.—Question, Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1241

RENT AID FOR METROPOLITAN POLICE.—Question, Captain Balfour (Middlesex, Hornsey); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 1241

EQUIPMENT ALLOWANCES FOR MILITARY OFFICERS ON TIBETAN MISSION.—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1242

FORESTRY EDUCATION IN IRELAND.—Question, Sir Thomas Esmonde (Wexford, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1243

LICENCE DUTY FOR CONVEYANCES IN DUBLIN.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1243

SALARY OF PRINCIPAL TEACHER IN BERRINGS NATIONAL SCHOOL.—Question, Mr. Sheehan (Cork Co., Mid.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1244

IRISH LAND ACT—PRICES OF LANDS.—Question, Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1245

INDIAN ARMY—NEW FIELD GUN—PROPORTION TO BE CONTRACTED FOR BY PRIVATE FIRMS.—Question, Mr. J. F. Hope (Sheffield, Brightside); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1245

LEATHER BANDOLIERS FOR VOLUNTEERS.—Question, Sir John Leng; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1245

TROOPS CONTROLLED BY DEPARTMENTS OTHER THAN WAR AND INDIA OFFICES.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1246

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

ARMY SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Denegal, S.); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 1247

PROTECTION OF SCOTCH FISHERIES.—Question, Mr. Ainsworth (Argyll); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) .. 1247

TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE—LEAVE REGULATIONS.—Question, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 1248

CIVIL RIGHTS LIMITATION FOR ASIATIC LABOUR.—Question, Mr. Lough; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1248

GOLD PRODUCTION OF THE RAND.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1249

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CROWN COLONIES AND THE SUGAR CONVENTION.—Questions, Mr. Charles McArthur (Liverpool Exchange) and Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answers, Mr. Lyttelton 1249

ST. GEORGE'S CHANNEL, BERMUDA.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1250

EMPLOYMENT OF NATIVES IN INDIAN ADMINISTRATION.—Question, Colonel Nolan (Galway, N.); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 1250

INDIAN COOLIE LABOUR FOR THE TRANSVAAL.—Questions, Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.); Answers, Mr. Brodrick 1251

M. LEOPOLD BLAIRAUX AND THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT.—Question, Mr. Brynmor Jones (Swansea District); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.) 1252

SHANGHAI AND NANKING RAILWAY.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Earl Percy 1252

BALKAN REFORMS.—Question, Sir John Kennaway (Devonshire, Honiton); Answer, Earl Percy 1253

RUSSIA AND PERSIA.—Question, Major Evans Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney); Answer, Earl Percy 1253

PROTECTION OF BRITISH SUBJECTS AT NEWCHWANG.—Question, Mr. Charles McArthur; Answer, Earl Percy 1254

SOMALILAND EXPENDITURE.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Earl Percy 1254

THE BUDGET.—Question, Mr. Flynn (Cork Co., N.); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 1255

ELECTRIFICATION OF METROPOLITAN RAILWAYS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) .. 1255

FISHING INDUSTRY AND RAILWAY RATES.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey) 1255

MR. HOOLEY'S BANKRUPTCY.—Question, Mr. Lambert; Answer, The Attorney-General (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs) 1256

GOVERNMENT GRANTS TO TRAINING COLLEGES.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 1256

DOMESTIC INSTRUCTION FOR HIGHLAND GIRLS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer The Lord Advocate (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton) 1257

IRISH NATIONAL TEACHERS.—Question, Mr. Lundon (Limerick, E.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1257

Rifles for the Royal Irish Constabulary.—Questions, Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.), Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Mr. Joyce (Limerick), and Captain Donelan (Cork Co., E.); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 1258

Dublin Training Colleges.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1258

Land Purchase in County Clare.—Question, Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1260

Preferential Railway Rates.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1260

Labourers' Cottages in Ireland.—Question, Mr. Sheehan (Cork Co., Mid.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1261

Irish Trade Statistics.—Question, Mr. Lough; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1261

Cork Postal Staff.—Question, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien (Cork); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 1262

Roscrea Post Office.—Question, Mr. Kendall O'Brien (Tipperary, Mid.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1263

Church Discipline.—Questions, Mr. David MacIver (Liverpool, Kirkdale), and Mr. Austen Taylor (Liverpool, E. Toxteth); Answers, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) .. 1263

Governmene Licensing Bill.—Question, Mr. John Ellis (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1264

Legal Terminology.—Questions, Mr. Swift MacNeill, and Mr. Labouchere (Northampton); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1264

The Cabinet Memorandum.—Questions, Mr. Lambert and Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1265

Scotch Education Bill.—Question, Mr. Crombie (Kincardineshire); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1266

Business of the House—Easter Holidays.—Question, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1266

Public Petitions Committee.—Third Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1267

NEW BILL.

Collegiate Charges (Scotland) Bill.—"To confer additional powers on the Court of Teinds in Scotland, with reference to Collegiate Charges," presented by Mr. James A. Campbell; supported by Sir James Fergusson, Mr. John E. Gordon, Mr. Maxwell, Sir Mark Stewart, and Sir Walter Thorburn; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 103.] 1267

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SUPPLY [14TH MARCH.]

Resolution reported.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1904–5. VOTE ON ACCOUNT.

"That a sum not exceeding £21,500,000, be granted to His Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charges for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905, viz :—

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS IV.

	£
Board of Education	7,000,000

CLASS I.

Royal Palaces and Marlborough House	26,000
Osborne	10,000
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens	35,000
Houses of Parliament Buildings	16,000
Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain	30,000
Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain	15,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings	20,000
Revenue Buildings	160,000
Public Buildings, Great Britain	160,000
Surveys of the United Kingdom	90,000
Harbours under the Board of Trade	10,000
Peterhead Harbour	10,000
Rates on Government Property	260,000
Public Works and Buildings, Ireland	110,000
Railways, Ireland	60,000

CLASS II.

United Kingdom and England :—

House of Lords Offices	6,000
House of Commons Offices	12,000
Treasury and Subordinate Departments	40,000
Home Office	60,000
Foreign Office	30,000
Colonial Office	25,000
Privy Council Office, etc.	4,000
Board of Trade	75,000
Mercantile Marine Services	30,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade	3
Board of Agriculture	65,000
Charity Commission	15,000
Civil Service Commission	18,000
Exchequer and Audit Department	25,000
Friendly Societies Registry	3,000
Local Government Board	85,000
Lunacy Commission	5,000
Mint (including Coinage)	5
National Debt Office	6,000
Public Record Office	10,000

	£
Public Works Loan Commission	5
Registrar General's Office	18,000
Stationery and Printing	340,000
Woods, Forests, etc., Office of	8,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	30,000
Secret Service	40,000
Scotland :—	
Secretary for Scotland	25,000
Fishery Board	8,000
Lunacy Commission	3,000
Registrar General's Office	2,000
Local Government Board	5,000
Ireland :—	
Lord-Lieutenant's Household	2,000
Chief Secretary for Ireland	12,000
Department of Agriculture	80,000
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	1,000
Local Government Board	25,000
Public Record Office	2,000
Public Works Office	18,000
Registrar General's Office	6,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey	7,000
CLASS III.	
United Kingdom and England :—	
Law Charges	45,000
Miscellaneous Legal Expenses	28,000
Supreme Court of Judicature	140,000
Land Registry	18,000
County Courts	4,000
Police, England and Wales	17,000
Prisons, England and the Colonies	360,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	140,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum	14,000
Scotland :—	
Law Charges and Courts of Law	30,000
Register House, Edinburgh	15,000
Crofters Commission, Scotland	2,000
Prisons, Scotland	38,000
Ireland :—	
Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions	32,000
Supreme Court of Judicature, and other Legal Departments	43,000
Land Commission	55,000
County Court Officers, etc.	45,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police	60,000
Royal Irish Constabulary	600,000
Prisons, Ireland	50,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools	55,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum	3,000

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CLASS IV.

United Kingdom and England :—	£
British Museum	80,000
National Gallery	10,000
National Portrait Gallery	3,000
Wallace Collection	3,000
Scientific Investigation, etc., United Kingdom	22,000
Universities and Colleges, Great Britain, and Intermediate Education, Wales	48,000

Scotland :—	
Public Education	750,000
National Gallery	5,000

Ireland :—	
Public Education	760,000
Endowed Schools Commissioners	400
National Gallery	2,500
Queen's Colleges	2,500

CLASS V.

Diplomatic and Consular Services	250,000
Uganda and East Africa Protectorates,, and Uganda Railway	300,000
Colonial Services	340,000
Telegraph Subsidies and Pacific Cable	35,000

CLASS VI.

Superannuation and Retired Allowances	300,000
Merchant Seamen's Fund, Pensions, etc.	2,000
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances	1,000
Hospitals and Charities, Ireland	17,000

CLASS VII.

Temporary Commissions	25,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	17,587
Repayments to the Local Loans Fund	– –
St. Louis Exhibition, 1904	60,000
Ireland Development Grant	184,000
Total for Civil Services	14,170,000

Revenue Departments.	
Customs	350,000
Inland Revenue	830,000
Post Office	3,800,000
Post Office Packet Service	250,000
Post Office Telegraphs	2,100,000
Total for Revenue Departments	7,330,000
Grand Total	£21,500,000

Resolution read a second time.

Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 1271
Sir Thomas Esmonde (*Wexford, N.*) 1288

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out '£21,500,000,' and insert '£21,499,900.' "—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

Question proposed, "That '£21,500,000' stand part of the Resolution."

Colonel Saunderson (*Armagh, N.*) 1291
Mr. Edward Barry (*Cork Co., S.*) 1295
Sir John Gorst (*Cambridge University*) 1296
Mr. Clancy (*Dublin Co., N.*) 1297
Mr. T. W. Russell (*Tyrone, S.*) 1302
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Wyndham, Dover*) 1305
Mr. T. P. O'Connor (*Liverpool, Scotland*) 1321
Mr. Wolff (*Belfast, E.*) 1325
Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (*Kerry, W.*) 1326
Mr. John Redmond 1328
Mr. Wyndham 1328

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 239; Noes, 128. (Division List No. 57.)

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, Mr. SPEAKER, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 15, proceeded to put the Question necessary to dispose of the Report of the Vote.

Question, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution," put, and agreed to.

EVENING SITTING.

Barnet District Gas and Water Bill (BY ORDER).—Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next (Evening Sitting). 1331

WOMEN'S DISABILITIES.

Sir Charles McLaren (*Leicestershire, Bosworth*) 1331
Colonel Denny (*Kilmarnock Burghs*) 1335

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the disabilities of Women in respect of the Parliamentary Franchise, ought to be removed by legislation."—(*Sir Charles McLaren.*)

Mr. Labouchere (*Northampton*) 1339
Sir John Rolleston (*Leicester*) 1344
Dr. Shipman (*Northampton*) 1346
Mr. Atherley Jones (*Durham, N.W.*) 1348
Mr. Cremer (*Shoreditch, Haggerston*) 1350

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Mr. Emmott (Oldham) 1356
Mr. Bond (Nottingham, E.) 1359
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) 1360
Mr. Crean (Cork County, S.E.) 1366

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 182 ; Noes, 68. (Division List No. 58.)

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS : THURSDAY, 17TH MARCH, 1904.

SAT FIRST.

THE LORD ALINGTON.—Sat first in Parliament after the death of his father .. 1369

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Victoria University of Yorkshire Bill [H.L.].—The Lord BALFOUR informed the House that the Opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The order made on the 4th instant discharged, and Bill committed 1369

Tynemouth Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments 1369

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1369

Tynemouth Gas Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1369

Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1369

PETITIONS.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES (METRIC SYSTEM) BILL [H.L.].—Petition in favour of ; of Corporation of Crewe ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1369

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).—No. 603. Germany (Technical schools for special branches of the metal industries) 1369

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND).—Return of the areas, population, and valuation of counties, burghs, and parishes in Scotland 1369

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP.—Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Commander H. P. Smith, one of His Majesty's Superintending Inspectors of Factories, upon the conditions of work in flax and linen mills as affecting the health of the operatives employed therein. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1369

PUBLIC RECORDS.—(Admiralty Departments).—Eleventh Schedule, containing a list and particulars of classes of documents which have been removed from the office of the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and deposited in the Public Record Office, but are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation therein.

(Court of Exchequer).—Schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents which formerly were or ought to have been in the Office of First Fruits and Tenths in the late Court of Exchequer, and which are now in the Public Record Office, but are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation therein. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1370

COLLEGE CHARTER ACT, 1871.—Application received from the Yorkshire College, Leeds, for the establishment of a University in Leeds, referred by His Majesty in Council for the Consideration and Report of a Committee of His Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council; together with a draft of the Charter applied for. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. [No. 33.] 1370

THE LATE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 1370
Lord Tweedmouth 1373

Wild Birds Protection Acts Amendment Bill.—Report of Amendments received.

The Earl of Wemyss 1374

Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

Justices of the Peace Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order): Bill reported without Amendment.

The Lord Chancellor (*The Earl of Halsbury*) 1374

Moved, That the Standing Committee be negatived.—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to, Bill to be read 3a To-morrow.

Bishopric of Bristol Bill [H.L.].—Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3a To-morrow 1375

THE SOUTH AFRICAN GARRISON.

Earl Carrington 1375
The Under Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Donoughmore*)

House adjourned at ten minutes before Five o'clock, till To morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 17TH MARCH, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 63 has been complied with, viz.:—Middlesborough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thornaby Tramways Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1376

Corbridge Gas Bill; Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill; South-Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway (Extension of Time) Bill. Read the third time, and passed 1377

South Shields Gas Bill—As Amended, considered; to be read the third time 1377

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E.).—Sir ALEXANDER H. BROWN reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past One of the Clock

Report to lie upon the Table 1377

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill.—Reported with Amendments;

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1377

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP NO. 4).—Mr. RUSSELL REA reported from the Committee on Group No. 4 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at Twelve of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 1377

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to extend the time for the completion of the authorised pier and works of the Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Company; and for other purposes." [Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [Lords.] 1377

Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [LORDS]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1377

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Wiveliscombe; Llandudno Junction; Croydon; Shipley (two); Paddington; Windhill; Torquay; Lewes; Saltaire; Leamington; Camden Town; Bristol; Bath; Madeley; Ramsbottom; and Heywood (three); to lie upon the Table 1377

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE.— Petition from Liverpool and Bootle, for extension to women; to lie upon the Table 1378

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SALE OF BUTTER BILL.—Petitions against; from Bethnal Green; Aston Newtown; Sheffield (two); Aston Cross; Bristol; Kingswood; and Winsdor; to lie upon the Table 1378

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOUR ORDINANCE).—Petition from Crewe, for withdrawal; to lie upon the Table 1378

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLLEGE CHARTER ACT, 1871 (YORKSHIRE COLLEGE, LEEDS).—Copy presented, of Application received from the Yorkshire College, Leeds, for the Establishment of a University in Leeds, which was referred by His Majesty in Council for the Consideration and Report of a Committee of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council; together with a copy of the draft of the Charter applied for [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1378

LEAD POISONING IN EARTHENWARE AND CHINA WORKS.—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 11th March; *Mr. Cochrane*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 103] 1387

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, No. 603 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1378

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Public Records (Admiralty).—Copy of Eleventh Schedule containing a list and Particulars of Classes of Documents which have been removed from the Office of the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; and deposited in the Public Record Office, but are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation therein [by Act];

2. Public Records (Court of Exchequer).—Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents which formerly were or ought to have been in the Office of First Fruits and Tenths in the late Court of Exchequer, and which are now in the public Record Office, but which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation therein [by Act] 1378

CHANNEL ISLANDS (CROWN RIGHTS).—Return ordered, " of Revenues drawn from the Crown Rights in the Channel Islands in each year during the past five years, distinguishing for each Island separately the Amounts received from Tithes, from Fines on Transfer of Property, from Seigneurial Dues, and from other sources; and stating the Cost of Collection, the several Payments made for Local Purposes, and the Net Amount paid into the Exchequer (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 351, of Session 1899)."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*) 1379

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LOCAL TAXATION ACCOUNT.—Return ordered, in the following form:—

Country.	1. Number of gallons at proof strength of tested spirits cleared for Home consumption year ended 30th day of September, 1903.	2. Number of liquid gallons of untested spirits cleared for Home consumption year ended 30th day of September, 1903.	3. Net amount paid over to the Local Taxation Accounts on account of Spirit Duties year ended 30th day of September, 1903.	4. Number of barrels of beer brewed year ended 30th day of September, 1903.	5. Number of barrels exported, destroyed, etc., on which the Duty has been remitted.	6. Net number of barrels liable for Local Taxation Account.	7. Net amount paid over to the Local Taxation Accounts on account of Beer Duty year ended 30th day of September, 1903.	8. Total amount paid over to the Local Taxation Accounts on account of Duties on Spirits and Beer year ended 30th day of September, 1903.
			£ s. d.				£ s. d.	£ s. d.
England								
Ireland								
Scotland								

—(*Mr. Nannetti.*)

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THE VOTE OF CENSURE.—Question, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1414

NEW MEMBER SWORN.—Lewis Vernon Harcourt, esquire, for North East Lancashire (Rossendale Division) 1419

NEW BILLS.

Local Government Act (1888) Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Local Government Act, 1888," presented by Mr. Spear; supported by Mr. Duke, Mr. Herbert Robertson, and Mr. Mildmay; to be read a second time upon Monday, 11th April, and to be printed. [Bill 130.] 1415

Infant Life Protection Act (1897) Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Infant Life Protection Act, 1897," presented by Mr. Spear; supported by Mr. Duke, Mr. Schwann, Mr. Lindsay Hogg, Mr. Melville, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Mildmay, and Mr. Allen; to be read a second time upon Monday, 11th April, and to be printed. [Bill 131.] 1415

THE LATE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE.

Mr. A. J. Balfour 1416
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman. 1416

SUPPLY [4TH ALLOTTED DAY] [10TH MARCH, AFTERNOON SITTING].

Resolution Reported.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

"That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 227,000, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

Resolution read a second time.

Mr. Courtenay Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) 1418

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out 227,000, and insert 222,000, instead thereof" (*Mr. Courtenay Warner.*)

Question proposed, "That 227,000 stand part of the said Resolution."

Mr. Peel (Manchester, S.) 1419
Colonel Blundell (Lancashire, Ince) 1422
Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.) 1423
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 1426
Captain Jessel (St. Pancras, S.) 1428
Major Evans Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) 1430

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Sir Robert Reid (Dumfries Burghs) .. 1433
The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, S.) .. 1435
Mr. Black (Banffshire) .. 1441
Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham) .. 1443
Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.) .. 1446
Sir Carne Rasch (Essex, Chelmsford) .. 1449
Mr. Priestley (Grantham) .. 1451
Major Seely (Isle of Wight) .. 1451
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) .. 1452
The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield) .. 1454
Mr. Whitley (Halifax) .. 1456
Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket) .. 1458

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 223 ; Noes, 110. (Division List No. 59.

Motion made, and Question put, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

The House divided :—Ayes, 263 ; Noes, 59. (Division List No. 60.)

SUPPLY [10TH MARCH, EVENING SITTING].

Resolution reported.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

"That a sum, not exceeding £9,746,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of His Majesty's Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) (General Staff Regiments, Reserve, and Departments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Mr. Whitley .. 1465
Mr. Buchanan .. 1466
Mr. Bromley Davenport .. 1468
Mr. Courtenay Warner .. 1469

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Various Powers) Bill (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed .. 147

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill (BY ORDER.)

Sir William Tomlinson (Preston) .. 1470
Mr. Courtenay Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) .. 1473

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill, that they insert provisions in the Bill requiring the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, in respect of any through rates for the carriage of merchandise between foreign countries and places in the United Kingdom which the company make or charge or to which they are party, to set out in their public rate-books at the ports of Goole and Hull, and any ports which may be hereafter established between those places, how much of each such rate is justly and reasonably appropriated by them, or is paid, payable, or agreed to be paid to or by them for (i.) land carriage abroad, and dock, harbour, and shipping charges abroad, (ii.) conveyance by sea, and (iii.) dock, harbour, and shipping charges at the British port, (iv.) conveyance by railway, either by goods or passenger trains, including any terminal and cartage charges, and cartage in the United Kingdom."—(*Sir William Tomlinson*).

Mr. Fielden (*Lancashire, Middleton*) 1473
Mr. Charles McArthur (*Liverpool Exchange*) 1474
Mr. Black (*Banffshire*) 1474
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (*Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars*) 1475
Mr. Maconochie (*Aberdeenshire, E.*) 1476

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 79 ; Noes, 103. (Division List No. 61.)

SUPPLY [4TH ALLOTTED DAY] [10TH MARCH, EVENING SITTING] REPORT.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [17th March], "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the Resolution, 'That a sum, not exceeding £9,746,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of His Majesty's Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) (General Staff Regiments, Reserve and Departments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905.'"

Question again proposed.

Mr. Courtenay Warner 1479
Mr. Lawson Walton (*Leeds, S.*) 1479
Dr. Farquharson (*Aberdeenshire, W.*) 1486
Mr. Arnold-Forster 1487
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (*Stirling Burghs*) 1490
Colonel Kenyon-Slaney (*Shropshire, Newport*) 1491

Question put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY [1ST MARCH].

Resolution reported.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

"That 131,100 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coastguard Guard services for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905, including 20,656 Royal Marines."

Resolution agreed to.

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Resolution [this day] from the Committee of Supply read—

"That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 227,000, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

Ordered, that leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide, during twelve months, for the discipline and regulation of the Army; and that Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster, Mr. Pretyman, and Mr. Bromley Davenport do prepare and bring it in 1493

Army (Annual) Bill.—"To provide, during twelve months, for the discipline and regulation of the Army," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 132] .. 1493

SUPPLY [2ND MARCH].

Resolution reported.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

"That a sum, not exceeding £6,691,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the expenses of wages, etc., to officers, seamen and boys, coast guard, and Royal Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

Resolution agreed to 1493

SUPPLY [3RD MARCH.]

Resolution reported.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

"That a sum, not exceeding £1,634,200, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other Charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

Resolution read a second time.

Mr. Whitley 1493

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the sum of '£1,634,200,' and insert the sum of '£1,633,200'"—(*Mr. Whitley*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That '£1,634,200' stand part of the said Resolution."

Mr. Spear (Devonshire, Tavistock) 1496
Mr. Buchanan 1497
Mr. Charles Hobhouse 1498
The Civil Lord to the Admiralty (Mr. Arthur Lee, Hampshire, Fareham) .. 1498

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 157; Noes, 52. (Division List No. 62.)

Resolution agreed to.

Adjourned at four minutes after Twelve o'clock.

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An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(*AUTHORISED EDITION*)

IN THE

FIFTH SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, IN THE
FOURTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 3rd March, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Maidenhead Bridge Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a} (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Southend Water Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^{a}; and referred to the Examiners.

Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas Bill [H.L.]; Portmadoc, Beddgelert, and South Snowdon Railway Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan Railway Bill [H.L.]; Preston and Blackburn Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Preston and Lytham Tramways and Tramroad Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.:—

E. Verulam,
E. Stradbroke,
L. Kilmarnock (*E. Erroll*),
L. Oranmore and Browne,
L. Kintore (*E. Kintore*) (Chairman);

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Thursday next at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill; Read 3^{a} (according to order); Amendments made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSION.

Fifty-third Report from the Church Estates Commissioners, for the year ended 1st March, 1904.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3123. Sweden (Finances, Trade etc., for the years 1902–1904).

EDINBURGH MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND ART.

Report for the year 1903, by James G. Dobbie, Esq., M.A., D.Sc., the Director.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Southern Division of Scotland, for the year 1903.

General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Northern Division of Scotland, for the year 1903.

Report of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, with appendix, 1903-1904.

Return showing the expenditure from the Grant for Public Education in Scotland in the year 1903, with statistics.

Code of regulations for continuation classes providing further instruction for those who have left school.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP (EARTHENWARE AND CHINA).

Amended special rules for the manufacture and decoration of earthenware and china, as established in certain factories and workshops, by the awards of the arbitrator, Chester Jones, Esquire, dated 19th of March, 1902, and 18th of February, 1904. Presented (by Command and pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

POLLING DISTRICT (COUNTY OF DORSET).

Order made by the county council of the county of Dorset altering certain polling districts in the northern parliamentary division. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SEA FISHERIES BILL [H.L.].

The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be printed, but no copies to be delivered out except to members of the Committee, and to such other persons as the Committee shall think fit, until further order. (No. 19.)

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY COUNCILS) BILL [H.L.].

POLLING ARRANGEMENTS (PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHS) BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to order). Bills reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3ª To-morrow.

WILD BIRDS PROTECTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

*THE MARQUESS OF **GRANBY**: My Lords, this is an extremely short Bill and one which I am sure will commend itself to your Lordships' favourable consideration. It has already passed the House of Commons, and is of so simple a character that it hardly requires any explanation at my hands. The object of the Bill is to render illegal the use of the pole trap, which is a steel spring trap with teeth, generally fastened by a chain to the top of a pole in a clearing of a wood. I do not think the use of this particular trap is of the slightest value with regard to the preservation of game, and it is a kind of trap which it is most desirable should be banned permanently from use. There is only one provision in the Bill to which I personally take some slight exception, and I am authorised to say by those who in the first instance promoted this measure that they are quite willing to eliminate that provision from the Bill when it reaches the Committee stage, should your Lordships see fit to give it a Second Reading. I refer to the advisability of deleting the word "wall." It is necessary very often for farmers and others to get rid of that most pestilent animal the rat; and the only means they have in some places of catching rats is by placing traps on walls or runs over walls. Therefore, if this measure should be fortunate enough to meet with your Lordships' approval, I shall at a future stage move the omission of that word. I beg to move.

Moved, that the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*The Marquess of Granby.*)

*LORD **TWEEDMOUTH**: My Lords, I agree with the noble Marquess that the old-fashioned pole trap with which this Bill deals is a cruel one, and one the use of which could well be abolished; but I think the Bill goes rather too far. The first clause proposes that from and after the passing of the Bill, "every person who, on any pole, tree, wall, fence, or other position elevated from the ground, shall affix, place, or set any spring trap, gin, or other similar instrument calculated to cause bodily injury to any wild bird coming in contact therewith," and so on. I think that is a very large proposal, and I would suggest the omission of the words "wall, fence, or other position elevated from the ground." I think the effect of the provision as it stands would be largely to prohibit trapping altogether, and I hope, when the Bill is in Committee, the noble Marquess will consent to some further Amendment on the lines I have suggested.

*The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (The Earl of Onslow): My Lords, I have nothing to say with regard to the principles of this Bill except that it has been under the consideration of the Home Office, and I am desired by my right hon. friend the Home Secretary to say that, as far as the Home Office is concerned, they have no objection to the Bill. Of course, if your Lordships make any Amendments in it, it is possible they may necessitate further consideration; but as at present advised the Home Office have no objection to offer to the Bill.

On Question, Bill read 2^{a}, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

THE COLONIES AND PREFERENTIAL TRADE.

Earl BEAUCHAMP rose to call attention to the references made to the self-governing Colonies at Birmingham on 15th May and at Glasgow on 6th October of last year, by the late Secretary of State for the Colonies; and to move for Papers. He said: My Lords, it will probably be to the convenience of the noble Duke the Under-Secretary for the Colonies, who I suppose will answer this question on behalf of His Majesty's Government, if I state at once which are the passages in the speech of Mr. Chamberlain to which I refer in this Motion. I refer more especially to the phrase which occurred in the speech at Birmingham, as to "an offer of preferential tariffs" on the part of the Colonies. I want to move for Papers which contain that offer, which will tell us where it is, what it means, and what that offer includes; and although the Motion makes some reference to a speech which was subsequently delivered at Glasgow, I do not wish to refer to that except in so far as occasional references serve to illustrate the meaning of the original phrase. At the time when that speech was made Mr. Chamberlain was a leading member of His Majesty's Government, and according to the theory of Cabinet responsibility, Ministers, as I understand it, are responsible for the phrases which he used on that occasion. On the subsequent occasion to which I have already referred—namely, at Glasgow, Mr. Chamberlain went somewhat further than the phrase which I have quoted. He said—

> "The Colonies are prepared to meet us. In return for a very modest preference they will give us a substantial advantage."

I think it was on the opening night of the session that the noble Marquess the Leader of this House declared that he was not in favour of banning the principle of a colonial preference or preferential tariff. I should be glad if he would take some opportunity of explaining to the country what kind of preferential tariff he means; whether he means a one-sided preference, or whether he will include in it that schedule of forbidden industries to which Mr. Chamberlain made reference at Glasgow. I think that schedule has been laughed out of court in the Colonies. I will quote what the Premier of Canada said at Montreal last autumn—

> "If we are to obtain concessions from Great Britain by a surrender of our political rights, I would say 'go no further'. Even for the maintenance of the British Empire it would be a most evil thing if any of the Colonies were to consent to surrender any of their legislative independence."

We have, therefore, in the words of one of our leading colonial statesmen, his opinion of the schedule of forbidden industries. I imagine that the noble Duke opposite may tell me that in the Blue-book containing an account of the Colonial Premiers' Conference in 1902 is to be found the offer from the Colonies. In referring to that Blue-book, your Lordships will, perhaps, allow me to pay a tribute to a relation of my own to whom was due the first idea of the assembly of the Colonial Premiers of this Empire. It was my uncle, Mr. Edward Stanhope, at that time Secretary of State for the Colonies, who wrote with his own hand the invitation to the Colonial Premiers, and though it fell to the noble Lord, Viscount Knutsford, to receive the Premiers in 1887, I am glad to have had this opportunity of recalling to your Lordships to whom was due the first idea of a Conference. On turning to page I in the Blue-book your Lordships will see that the introductory note states that—

> "The various Governments were also invited to furnish a statement of any subjects which they thought might usefully be discussed, and, with a view to facilitate and give a definite direction to the discussion, to furnish the text of any resolutions which they might desire to submit to the Conference."

On reference to page VII we find that the commercial relations of the Empire were submitted for discussion at this Colonial Conference, not by any representative of the Colonies, but by the Secretary of State for the Colonies; and although it is true that there follows a Motion from the Government of New Zealand on the subject of preferential tariffs, the concluding words of their Motion are—

> "And that in the mother country rebate of duty on colonial products now taxable should be conceded."

We have, therefore, from New Zealand nothing in the nature of an offer, but merely the suggestion of a bargain, which is a very different thing indeed; and it is not from New Zealand that any hint of the kind comes, because it was the Secretary of State for the Colonies who put down the subject for discussion. Still more important really than the attitude of the Colonial Premiers at that Conference, is the attitude of the Colonial Parliaments since Mr. Chamberlain's speech at Birmingham. There are, I think, twenty-one Parliaments in the British Empire, but, with the single exception of Manitoba, not one of them has passed a resolution in favour of Mr. Chamberlain's scheme. That silence in eloquent of the feelings they entertain is the matter.

We see this morning, in the speech which was made by Lord Northcote in opening the Commonwealth Parliament, a reference to this subject, but we may say of that, as we may also say of the invitation which has been extended to the ex-Colonial Secretary, that it was not made on behalf of a united nation, but was a message sent by a political leader who had not met with any particular success at the polls, and who was anxious, if he could, to get the services of a star lecturer who would be willing to go round the Colonies and induce the people to vote for Mr. Deakin himself. I may remind noble Lords opposite that a large number, if not the whole, of the party under Mr. Reid are opposed to the system of preferential tariffs. In the last session of Parliament Mr. Reid pressed the Australian Premiers with regard to the very phrase which is the text on which I am hanging my own speech, the "offer of a preferential tariff," and Mr. Deakin said—

> "The Leader of the Opposition doubts the application of the word 'offer' to the resolution at the Colonial Conference, and therefore I tell the hon. Member frankly that I know of nothing that can be so construed."

We have, therefore, from Australia a direct refusal on the part of the Premier to regard what passed as being in any sense an offer. I am able to quote an eloquent extract from a speech by a follower of Mr. Reid, who, in his absence, acts as Leader of the Opposition. I refer to Sir William McMillan, and the extract from his speech may, I think, be compared to Mr. Seddon's immortal phrase that—

> "The open door is the open hell to the British Empire."

Sir William McMillan said—

> "The whole thing was preposterous nonsense. Further, was Australia going to make enemies of those countries where her future trade lay? It was a mistake, it was un-Christian, it was not an advance of British civilisation, but a decadent thing."

He was followed by Mr. Reid, who spoke of the open-door policy, as apart from the preferential tariff policy advocated by Mr. Chamberlain, as being—

> "absolutely essential to the security of the whole Empire."

Not even the last Premier of the Australian Commonwealth has ever said anything which could possibly be construed as an offer from Australia. In 1902, Sir E. Barton made one or two speeches at Montreal and Toronto on his way back to Australia; and, while he said that Australia would not be likely to reduce her tariff in favour of British goods, he admitted it was possible they might raise it against the foreigner. If the tariff wall against us is already high, it will be difficult for us to take much advantage if it is raised still higher against the foreigner. That, I think, is sufficiently obvious, at any rate to the manufacturers in this country. I should like to quote to your Lordships the figures of Australian trade, which go to show what advantage a preferential tariff would be likely to be to British trade in the Commonwealth. The Australian import trade at this moment is of the value of £25,500,000, of which foreign countries import £7,000,000. Of this £7,000,000, £3,000,000 is made up of sugar, oil, and other products which are not to be found within the British possessions. There remain non-British patented articles and "specialities" from various foreign countries, which come to another £3,000,000. The balance which is offered to us as the result is, therefore, no more than £1,000,000, and that, I imagine, we should be able to capture with a little more energy on the part of our manufacturers.

I hope your Lordships will allow me to turn for a moment to the Colony of New South Wales, of which I had the honour to be Governor for some years. I do not know a stronger argument in favour of the free-trade policy than is to be supplied by the increase of the imports, exports, and the general trade of New South Wales and Victoria. Your Lordships know that these two colonies are coterminous, that the climate is very similar, that the agricultural industry is the chief industry in both, that with the exception, perhaps, of the fact that New South Wales is far larger and that it has a large drought-stricken area, the two colonies are almost exactly alike. The difference between them is that while New South Wales is a free-trade colony, Victoria is a protectionist colony; and there is the most remarkable difference in the trade of these colonies between 1890 and 1900. During those ten years the imports of the free-trade colony increased no less than 22 per cent.; while in the same period, under the same circumstances, the imports of the protectionist colony decreased 27 per cent. The exports of the free-trade colony increased during the same period 27 per cent., while the exports of the protectionist colony decreased 11 per cent. But the most remarkable figures of all are these, that during the same period the revenue of the free-trade colony increased 147 per cent., while the revenue of the protectionist colony decreased 3 per cent. If I were willing to worry your Lordships I could bring figures quite as remarkable bearing upon the immigration statistics of those two colonies.

Having mentioned Australia, I wish to refer now to another great colony—to Canada. I think there are a good many misconceptions abroad with regard to Canada. There is a purple patch which adorns the perorations of noble Lords on the opposite Benches with regard to the treatment which Germany has meted out to Canada. On 28th May, in another place, Mr. Chamberlain said—

> "Germany alone has penalised Canada to the extent of a very large additional duty. Canada gave us this preference five years ago, and for five years she has been penalised. We have been bearing hot resentment in our bosoms."

Perhaps a lotion of cold fact may do something to relieve the hot resentment of which the ex-Colonial Secretary spoke. The facts are these, that until 1897 Great Britain enjoyed the most-favoured-nation treatment from Germany. At the same time Canada enjoyed an equal advantage. In 1897 it occurred to Canada that she would like to have a preferential tariff with our own country, and accordingly, in 1898, when notice had been given, the preferential treatment of Canada ceased, and Canada was put upon the normal tariff of Germany. Germany has two tariffs, one which is accorded to nations which do not discriminate against that country, and the normal tariff, upon which

Canada came, for nations which had discriminated against Germany. In those circumstances it seems to me that the action of Germany was a perfectly commonplace business transaction, and the result of it has not been to penalise Canada to any great extent. In the year 1897 the exports of Canada to the United Kingdom were £15,900,000 in value, in 1901 they had gone up to £21,600,000. While the exports to the United Kingdom had gone up 35 per cent., we find that the exports to Germany, in spite of the fact that Germany had penalised Canada to an extent which created hot resentment in the bosom of Mr. Chamberlain, went up no less than 109 per cent.

What is the object with which foreign countries, or, indeed, our own colonies, put on tariffs? It is surely not so much with a view to protecting their own manufacturer against the foreign manufacturer as it is to protect him against whatever quarter he may find opposition strongest; and therefore it comes about that as a matter of fact these tariffs are directed rather against the British manufacturer than against the manufacturer of foreign countries. The policy of Canada is well expressed in a resolution which was passed by the Manufacturers' Association in Toronto in September, 1903. This was their resolution—

> "That the changed conditions which now obtain in Canada demand the immediate and thorough revision of the tariff upon lines which will more effectually transfer to our workshops the manufacture of many of our goods which we now import from other countries. That while such a tariff should be primarily framed for Canadian interests, it should nevertheless give a substantial preference to the mother country . . . recognising always that under any condition the minimum tariff must afford adequate protection to all Canadian producers."

I think it was at the same time that Mr. Drummond, the president of the Association, said, in the course of a speech, that—

> "Canada must necessarily provide under all conditions that the minimum tariff should afford fair protection to Canadian producers."

That is the policy of Canada. Let me now turn to the results of that policy. The noble Duke will find, on page 84 of the Blue-book, some startling figures which bear upon this. It is there stated that—

> "The total annual imports into Canada have grown roughly by £14,500,000 in the five years 1896-97 to 1900-01. Of this total growth £6,250,000 are accounted for by goods still subject to the general tariff (*i.e.* goods from countries not entitled to preferential treatment, or of a class excluded from the benefit of that tariff), and £6,250,000 by free goods; while goods admitted under the preferential tariff have grown by £2,000,000 sterling."

And, again, in the following paragraph appear these figures—

> "Nor are the conclusions altered if we consider the rate rather than the total of increase. Thus, imports of all kinds have increased by over 62 per cent., in value, 'general tariff' goods by about 62 per cent., free goods 67 per cent., and 'preferential tariff' goods under 55 per cent."

There, again, goods coming in under the preferential tariff have not increased to the same extent as the goods coming in under the normal tariff of Canada. I would next refer the noble Duke to paragraph 11 on the same page, in which it is stated that—

> "The result (of these figures) is to show that the continuous decrease which has been taking place in recent years in the proportion of imports from the United Kingdom into Canada has not been arrested by the operation of the tariff."

It is interesting to turn to the actual figures. The imports into Canada from the United Kingdom under the preferential tariff have increased under 70 per cent., but the goods from the United States, which are not under a preferential tariff, have increased over 100 per cent; so that, in spite of the preferential tariff, the goods from this country have not increased at anything like the same rate as the goods from the United States. The reason for that is quite obvious. It will be found on page 85 of the Blue-book—

> "Although, therefore, British goods enjoy a preference compared with the same goods imported from other countries, the average *ad valorem* rate of duty on British imports taken as a whole is still higher than the average duty levied on all imports, and much higher than the average duty levied on imports from the United States."

So it comes about that, while goods sent from this country into Canada are subject to an *ad valorem* duty of 18 per cent., goods from the United States only have to pay 12 per cent., and imports from all the rest of the world pay a total of only 16 per cent. Therefore, in spite of this so-called preferential tariff, British goods are, all the same, penalised when they are sent into Canada. The unfortunate thing is that we can hardly turn to any figures of British trade with Canada without finding the same result. I will content myself with giving your Lordships one more instance, namely, the imports of Canada. I take the average of five years from 1893 to 1897, and compare that with the figures of the imports into Canada in 1901. These are the increases. The increase of Belgian imports is 421 per cent., the increase of French imports 102 per cent, the increase of imports from the United States 93 per cent., the increase of German imports 31 per cent., while the increase in the imports from the United Kingdom, under a preferential duty, is only 23 per cent. That, my Lords, is, I think, eloquent of the value of preferential treatment to our British manufacturers.

I wish to refer to the evolution of the resolution which is frequently referred to in these discussions as being the offer from Canada. It appears on page 10 of the Blue-book. There is there set out the preferential treatment of British goods which the representatives of the Colonies are prepared to recommend to their respective Parliaments; but when we turn from page 10, where this appears boldly and without comment, to page 35, we find that this is only what the Board of Trade "understood" to be the Canadian offer; and on page 37 we find that that offer was subject to this drawback, that they would only make it on condition that the Imperial Government would accept the principle of preferential trade generally, and—

> "Particularly grant to the food products of Canada in the United Kingdom exemption from duties now levied, or hereafter imposed."

Therefore I hope the noble Duke will not fall into the error of looking upon that resolution as being an offer, since it is, after all, nothing more than a bargain proposed by Canada in this matter.

I now come to a colony which has attained especial importance because it was referred to in the course of His Majesty's Gracious Speech from the Throne—the Colony of New Zealand. This colony has lately passed a Preferential Trade Act, but it was not passed unanimously. The Third Reading took no less than twenty-five hours; and the principal feature of the Act is that there is not very much preferential tariff about it. It provides, not that there shall be any reduction in respect of British goods going into New Zealand, but that there shall be a surtax on foreign goods going in; and it has been calculated by speakers in the New Zealand House of Assembly that, while British manufacturers may possibly succeed in capturing the profits on £500,000 worth of manufactured goods, New Zealand stands to gain no less than £725,000 in hard cash. But there is another part of this famous Act, to which I would call attention—the part which refers to reciprocal trade with foreign countries. Under that Mr. Seddon took power for the Government to abolish all duties on goods which come from countries "not being part of the British dominions." Therefore, under this Act which has been mentioned as being so patriotic, we find that British goods cannot possibly receive that advantage which is offered to foreign countries, for the words are explicit—"not being part of the British dominions." I think we are entitled to ask His Majesty's Government if that is the kind of preferential tariff which they are prepared to recommend this country to accept.

I do not think I need trouble your Lordships with regard to South Africa at any length. In South Africa, as in New Zealand, the principle has not been accepted unanimously. Before he went to the Bloemfontein Conference, Sir Gordon Sprigg told the House of Assembly that he could give the House an assurance that the question of preferential tariff would not be an article of the Convention; and when it came on for discussion in the Cape Assembly it was only carried by the casting vote of the Speaker. It is noticeable that for the first time in the British Empire, the Crown Colonies have adopted the system of protection, and that has only been done under the overwhelming influence of the representatives of the Crown Colonies at the Bloemfontein Conference.

There are two or three other matters to which I wish to refer. One is with regard to the Colony of Manitoba, the only colony whose Parliament has passed a resolution in favour of Mr. Chamberlain's scheme. That colony chiefly sends to this country wheat, which, under the Glasgow scheme, is to receive an advantage of 5 per cent. No wonder, therefore, that Manitoba accepts that joyfully. But quite near to Manitoba is another province, which chiefly imports lumber to this country. Under the Glasgow scheme the lumber from Ontario is to have a duty placed upon it of 10 per cent., and, therefore, while Manitoba is to gain an advantage of 5 per cent., the neighbouring colony is to be penalised to the extent of 10 per cent. I know His Majesty's Government have dissociated themselves from Mr. Chamberlain's policy, but that seems to me so remarkable a feature in a scheme which is by way of benefiting our colonies that I venture to hope noble Lords opposite will be able to give us some explanation regarding it. One matter which ought properly to be considered is the question of how these colonies propose to make up the deficit which will arise if a real preferential duty is given to this country. It is impossible for them to approximate their fiscal system to the fiscal system of the mother country, and therefore it is a most serious matter for consideration from what source they will be able to draw enough funds to make up the deficit.

With regard to the Australian Commonwealth, Section 99 of the Commonwealth Act contains a provision that—

> "The Commonwealth shall not by any law or regulation of trade, commerce, or revenue, give preference to one State or any part thereof over another State or any part thereof."

Imagine that we impose a duty against, say, bananas, which come from other parts of the world. Queensland would then gain the advantage of that duty on the bananas which they send to this country; but the people of Western Australia, who do not produce bananas, may object to this advantage to Queensland. Any individual in Australia is able to bring the matter before the Federal High Court, and if that Court decided that this is—as undoubtedly it would be—a preference giving an advantage to one State or a part thereof, over another State, the Federal Government would find itself obliged to protest to this country on the subject.

I hope the noble Duke will be able to give us some enlightenment on these three special points. I do not think they have attracted the attention they deserve. It seems to me that, in common with many other parts of this scheme, they have been thrust upon the country without due consideration, and they are the more dangerous in consequence. There are many in this country who think that a policy of preferential tariffs, in the present position of the world's commerce, would be a dangerous policy; thrice dangerous would it be if we were to thrust it upon the Colonies against their wish or inclination. I myself had the good fortune to see the enthusiasm and loyalty of the Colonies at the time when the South African War broke out. The movement was not one which was forced upon Australia from above; it was not led by Press or by Parliament; it had its origin in the heart of the people, and it was the people themselves who swept away all the opposition to it. I think, indeed, it would be dangerous to this country if we were to try to substitute the brittle ties of gold and of interest for the ties of enthusiasm, loyalty, and love which at present do bind the Colonies to the mother country.

Moved, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for Papers relating to offers said to have been made by the self-governing Colonies for mutual trade relations with the United Kingdom. (*The Earl Beauchamp.*)

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Duke of MARLBOROUGH): My Lords, I have listened with great care and attention to all that has been said by the noble Earl opposite, and I am sure he will forgive me if I do not absolutely reply to many of those Questions which he has put to me. They were of a variety and character complicated in themselves, and when combined together are almost beyond the capacity of an Under-Secretary to deal with in the short time that I shall venture to address your Lordships this evening. I gather from the remarks of the noble Earl that his chief desire is to have an explanation of the late Colonial

Secretary's speech at Birmingham in May last. I understood that the noble Earl did not desire any explanation of any portion of the speech delivered by Mr. Chamberlain in Glasgow in October. He confined himself to the speech delivered in May, and I think the particular passage of which he desires an explanation is the passage in which the late Colonial Secretary says that the Canadian Ministers, when they were over here, made a definite offer.

EARL BEAUCHAMP: The phrase which I quoted in my speech referred to the whole of the Colonies, and not only to Canada. There was a reference to an "offer from the Colonies."

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I would ask the noble Earl to refer to the Blue-book for a moment. On page 36 there is the resolution of the Prime Ministers of the self-governing Colonies, in which appear these words—

> "That with a view, however, to promoting the increase of trade within the Empire, it is desirable that those colonies which have not already adopted such a policy" (*i.e.*, a preferential policy) "should, as far as their circumstances permit, give substantial preferential treatment to the products and manufactures of the United Kingdom."

We believe that that resolution expresses the opinions and desires of the self-governing Colonies to come into closer commercial relations with the mother country. The Canadian Ministers went a step further. As the noble Earl has pointed out, there is a Memorandum in the Blue-book by those Ministers, in which the following passage occurs—

> "From the beginning of the proceedings the Canadian Ministers have claimed that in consideration of the substantial preference given by Canada for some years to the products of the mother country, Canadian food products should be exempted in the United Kingdom from the duties recently imposed. Representations to this effect previously made through the High Commissioner for Canada, were supplemented by the Ministers both in writing and in the personal interviews with the Imperial Ministers."

Those representations were necessarily of a semi-official nature, and are not shown in the Blue-book presented to Parliament, but I think that that passage is sufficient justification for the contention of the late Colonial Secretary, when he said that the Colonies had made a further definite offer. I could not quite gather what the view of the noble Earl was upon the Colonial Conference, but I am afraid that his view and mine somewhat differ. The Colonies in general have not made us a definite offer in the sense that they will give us something if we give them something in return, excepting the case of Canada; but they have in a practical manner invited us to enter into reciprocal relations by giving us, as a token and pledge of their goodwill and desire in this matter, preferential treatment which is neither inconsiderable nor by any means valueless. The noble Earl had a great deal to say with regard to the Dominion of Canada, and I think he quoted a passage from a speech by the present Prime Minister in which he disclaimed the great desire for closer commercial relations. I am not aware of that passage—it may exist— but let us examine for one moment the views and the wishes of the Canadian people with regard to this matter as far as we are able to ascertain them. So far back as 1891 the Canadian Parliament unanimously passed an address asking the Imperial Government to renounce the Belgian and the German treaties on the ground that these treaties prevented preferential trade arrangements between the various parts of the Empire. Then, again, in 1892 a resolution was passed in the Canadian Parliament expressing the desire that preferential tariffs should be granted to the mother country; and in 1897 we find that the Canadian Parliament, with the approval of both sides of the House, brought in a Bill granting Great Britain a preferential treatment of 25 per cent., in the first instance, which was subsequently raised to 33 per cent. In addition to that we have the expression of opinion of the Canadian Ministers themselves at the Colonial Conference in 1902, and I am informed that at the Congress of the Chambers of Commerce held last year in Montreal the delegates were unanimous in their desire to come into closer commercial relationship with the mother country. Finally, there have been many resolutions passed in Canada, by the Canadian Mining Association, by the Boards of Trade of Toronto, of Montreal, of London and St. John, and many other important cities in Canada, all advocating a closer commercial union with Great Britain. I think the noble Earl quoted opposite expressions of opinion. That may be so, but I think that the instances which I have ventured to bring before the notice of your Lordships are sufficient justification of the statement that there is a distinct desire on the part of the Canadian people to come into as close commercial relationship as possible with us, compatible with the interests of their own country.

I pass from these considerations for a moment to examine the practical result of the preference which Canada has given to us. I understood from the noble Earl's speech that he thought the preference was of no considerable importance or value. I do not wish to weary your Lordships with figures, but I cannot help referring, on that point, to the trade relations between England and Canada, and between Germany and Canada for the last ten years. The statistics show that Germany exported to Canada, in 1886, £440,000 worth of material, and 1897, the year of the preference, it had increased to £838,000. Now, in 1886, Great Britain exported to Canada £8,000,000 worth of material, and in 1897 this had sunk to £5,000,000 worth; that is to say, before the reduction in the tariff took place our trade with Canada was decreasing, whilst Germany's trade was increasing. Let us see what the figures have been since the preference has been granted. Germany's export trade to Canada had increased in 1902 to £1,900,000. That is a distinct rise; but to what extent has our trade risen? Whereas in 1897 our trade stood at £5,000,000, last year it has risen to no less than £11,000,000. Subsequent to the reduction of the tariff, therefore, Germany's trade and ours increased, but the trade between this country and Canada increased at a greater rate than that between Germany and Canada.

I should like to turn from Canada to the consideration of South Africa, and the result of the South African Customs Union upon trade in this country. As your Lordships are aware, the South African Customs Union has granted a preferential treatment on articles grown, produced, and manufactured in Great Britain. The preference does not include British possessions, but is exclusively for Great Britain. The noble Earl seemed to think that these preferences were of little value, but I hope I shall be able to prove that in the case of the South African Customs Union the preference has been of distinct advantage to this country. South Africa gives a preference of 25 per cent. to goods exported from Great Britain; that is to say, when the foreigner pays 10 per cent. to get goods admitted, we pay 7½ per cent., and goods, in respect of which the foreigner has to pay 2½ per cent., go in from this country free; and under that particular schedule all machinery goes into South Africa free of import duty. What is the effect of this tariff on our trade? It is perhaps somewhat early to judge, but I will take as an illustration the year 1902. The total trade of South Africa in that year was worth £49,750,000, of which £30,000,000 was trade between Great Britain and South Africa, and £8,750,000 trade between British possessions and South Africa. Therefore three-fifths of the total trade of South Africa is between Great Britain and that country. It is estimated that the value of the articles from Great Britain which would be favourably affected as the result of the tariff regulation is £17,000,000; so that more than half of our trade will be favourably affected by the operation of the tariff, and the volume of trade between South Africa and Great Britain will in consequence be augmented.

I pass from the consideration of South Africa to dwell for a moment on the new tariff regulations in New Zealand. The noble Earl suggested that the New Zealand Preferential and Reciprocal Trade Act is in the nature of a bargain, and he doubted very much whether we should benefit at all from this tariff. I do not think that his anticipations will prove to be correct. Under the first schedule of this Act foreign goods pay double the ordinary duty; under the second schedule they pay the ordinary duty plus a half; and under the third schedule the foreigner pays twenty per cent. when our goods go in free. The total imports into New Zealand in 1902 amounted to £11,000,000, of which £6,750,000 were from Great Britain. Our total trade with New Zealand amounts to nearly £7,000,000, and as it is calculated that £1,500,000 of that trade will be favourably affected by the operation of the new Tariff Act, it follows that something less than a quarter of our total trade with New Zealand will receive benefit under that measure. The third schedule, as I have said, admits British goods free when the foreigner has to pay 25 per cent. It is estimated that in 1902, under this schedule, no less than £350,000 worth of British goods would have gone into New Zealand free. I have been told further, by an authority who is not often wrong in these matters, that, whereas before this Act was brought into operation there was only one fleet of steamers running between London and New Zealand, already, as a result of this Act, a fresh line of steamers has been started from Glasgow to New Zealand in anticipation of an increased volume of trade.

Then the noble Earl went on to discuss Australia. He was inclined to think that Australians were to a large extent opposed to any closer commercial union with this country. The noble Earl is perfectly entitled to his own view, and as he has resided in Australia for several years in a most distinguished capacity, he is in a position to gauge fairly accurately the opinion of the Australian people on this matter. But I would remind him that the present Ministry have expressed their desire to deal with this question, and that they are anxious to offer some system of preference to this country. It is true that the Opposition are opposed to a reduction of the tariff with a view to granting this country any preference. We have an indication of the view of Australia at the present time from what the Governor-General said in his remarks yesterday in opening the Commonwealth Parliament. Lord Northcote said—

> "His advisers had been pleased to note the cordiality with which the proposals for a preferential tariff were regarded in Australia. He was confident that this feeling would be strengthened when their author, Mr. Chamberlain, was able to visit Australia."

The noble Earl quoted the statements of distinguished citizens in Australia in support of his view. I would like, since he has done so, to quote the remarks of the present Prime Minister, Mr. Deakin. Speaking at Melbourne on 30th October, Mr. Deakin said—

> "A protectionist tariff is essential for Australia, but nothing in that fact is antagonistic to closer trade relations."

And on 24th December, after the elections had taken place, he said that—

> "He observed that the statements of the anti-Chamberlain Press were either their own Party interpretations of the results, or were due to the biassed opinions telegraphed from Australia. It was, for example, entirely erroneous for one London paper to say that it was dead against Mr. Chamberlain's policy. That policy was supported by the whole Ministerial party and by an influential minority of the Opposition."

That is the view of the Prime Minister of the Australian Commonwealth. I do not wish to press the point. I am perfectly prepared to admit that there is a distinct difference of opinion in Australia, but I do not think the noble Earl is justified in claiming that the opinions of the Australian people is entirely on his side and entirely opposed to a closer commercial union.

I have tried to confine myself to a simple, plain statement of the case. I hope that nobody will draw any wrong conclusions or inferences from what I have ventured to say. Some noble Lords might be tempted to draw this inference, that, as I have tried to point out the value to this country of the preference that our colonies have granted us, therefore I am urging to-night the policy known as Imperial preference. Nothing is further from my intention. My desire has simply been to show that the late Colonial Secretary, when he spoke in Birmingham in May last, was perfectly correct in stating that the Colonies wished to come into closer commercial relations with us, and that Canada had, under certain conditions, made a further definite offer to us. When we consider the terms of the resolution passed at this Conference, the fact that these resolutions have been put into practical and concrete form by three of the self-governing colonies themselves, that the advantages to our trade in consequence can be absolutely ascertained by reference to facts and figures, I am somewhat bewildered by the noble Earl's saying that, because only one of the colonial Parliaments has passed a resolution in favour of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals, therefore the Colonies are not in favour of coming into closer commercial relations with this country, as far as is compatible with their prosperity. I submit, although I cannot attempt to prove it this evening, that there is something more in the narrative of the Colonial Conference than a bald recital of it may convey. The spirit of the British Empire is not to be gauged by the guarded utterances of statesmen who know how jealously and carefully their words are scrutinised and examined by those they represent; nor can it be estimated by the somewhat sordid process of trying to add up the profit and loss account of trade re-adjustment. I think the problem lies deeper than this. We might as well assert that the armies which are sent from this country can be calculated by the Estimates which the War Office make, or measure the value of the Victoria Cross by calculating the cost of a piece of bronze of a similar size and shape. To assert that the minimum perceptible is the limit of the inter-active influence between ourselves and our colonial kinsmen is likely to lead us into estimates which are untrue and conclusions which are totally inaccurate. There is more in the narrative in this Blue-book than a mere cursory glance would lead one to suppose. How much more, I desire not to dwell upon this evening; but the narrative, stated simply, plainly, almost baldly, suggests conclusions to which I think your Lordships are not wholly indifferent or wholly insensible.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: My Lords, one or two remarks are suggested by the speech of the noble Duke to which we have listened with so much interest. I do not at all quarrel with the metaphors with which the noble Duke's peroration was adorned, and I will say at once, and frankly, that I very much prefer the analogy he has drawn from the British Army to that which was drawn in another place with regard to Chinese labour by the Secretary of State for India. But, after all, that is only a matter of temperament and taste. What is really the point which is brought to my mind by the noble Duke's speech is one that has been most prominently before me throughout the whole of the present session of Parliament. There is something which lends a flavour of unreality to our debates, and it is this—that, while we have excellent representatives of the Government in this House, and excellent representatives of the Opposition, what we really require and have not got is a representative of Mr. Chamberlain. I am not at all sure that Lord Cadogan in the recent debate in this House on the fiscal question did not to some extent make a bid for that position; but he is unfortunately absent, and we, therefore, are reduced to discussing with great unreality in this House the policy in which the country is really interested, and which overlays and screens whatever may be the policy of the Government themselves.

I did hope, for I have been engaged ever since the speech of 15th May, in endeavouring to discover where the offer of the Colonies was to be found, that I might have heard something to verify and substantiate that offer from the noble Duke to-night. He was for a short time Under-Secretary to Mr. Chamberlain, and I could not help believing that at last we might be in sight of the secret which has eluded us so long; that possibly in some sequestered corner of the Colonial Office there might be lurking some precious fragments of this austerely guarded secret; and we should at last be face to face with what you must remember is the cardinal spirit, origin, and base of the whole of this policy— the offer which was made to us by the Colonies, which it would be criminal and dangerous for us to neglect. In the speech of the noble Duke, admirable as I thought it from several points of view, he was reduced to the same shifts as his great ex-chief in attempting to explain this mystic phrase. He brought us back once more to the resolution of the Colonial Premiers at the Colonial Conference, but no amount of dialectic and no efforts of eloquence will make out of that resolution anything but a pious opinion of the Colonial Prime Ministers — a pious, patriotic, and Imperial opinion, if you will, but in no sense an opinion that can be described as an offer which it would be criminal and dangerous to neglect.

I am not going through the various details of tariff, but the noble Duke brought forward figures to prove that the Canadian preference had been a great success. I have a great regard for the noble Duke's opinion, more especially as he represents the Colonial Office in this matter; but I still think that the opinion of Mr. Chamberlain carries more weight on that subject than the noble Duke's, and I will read a sentence of what Mr. Chamberlain said at the Colonial Conference—

> "I have to say to you that while I cannot but gratefully acknowledge the intention of this proposal and its sentimental value as a proof of goodwill and affection, yet its substantial results have been altogether disappointing to us, and I think they must have been equally disappointing to its promoters."

Then, in the following paragraph, Mr. Chamberlain goes chapter and verse through the various figures relating to that proposal to show how it has been so disappointing. I am glad that a more sanguine spirit has animated the Colonial Office since Mr. Chamberlain left it, but I cannot take that as a positive opinion counterbalancing the authoritative statement of Mr. Chamberlain. The noble Duke states again that the Australian Government are extremely favourable to the proposals of Mr. Chamberlain; and he quoted a passage which says that the Australian Ministers hope that when Mr. Chamberlain shall visit the Colonies, and stump them on their behalf, he will produce a state of opinion still more favourable to colonial preference than that which now exists. I have great faith in the magic of the right hon. Gentleman's eloquence, and what it may effect in Australia I do not know. But I would point out that the opinion of the Australian Prime Minister would be of more value if he had not just gone through a general election, or if, having gone through that general election, he had returned with a majority at his back. That election has been fought since the proposals of Mr. Chamberlain were before the country. It took place in the autumn, and Mr. Chamberlain's proposals were thundered into the ears of the Australian public by the Ministers who thought they gave to them a chance of a majority. But they have come back not with a majority, but with less than a third of the Commons House in the Commonwealth Legislature. Therefore, whatever may be the opinion of Mr. Deakin and his colleagues as to the advisability of Imperial preference, it cannot be said to carry the authority of the Australian people behind it. The noble Duke concluded by showing a sagacity beyond his years when he said that he wished to guard himself against being supposed to follow the policy of Mr. Chamberlain. I wish that all His Majesty's Ministers were equally discreet.

I wish to guard myself against being supposed in any way to disparage the efforts and good wishes and good intentions of the Colonies in regard to this question of preferential tariffs. We have all freely acknowledged what has been done by Canada. We freely acknowledge what has been recently done in South Africa. We have hopes of Australia, and we hope that what has been done in New Zealand will be fruitful. But I should be curious to learn whether the noble Duke would care to take shares in the new line of steamers between Glasgow and New Zealand to which he referred. We have all felt sensible of these efforts. But is that a reason for dislocating our whole fiscal system in order to meet these preferences in the Colonies? My contention is this, and it is supported by the language of the Canadian Prime Minister. The Canadian preference was given, not as a matter of bargain—the Canadian Prime Minister was very explicit as to that—but as a matter of favour and goodwill and loyalty and affection to the mother country. However fruitful these preferences may be—even if they realise all the golden dreams of the noble Duke and disappoint the more gloomy forebodings of the late Colonial Secretary—they are no more than a sign of the Imperial loyalty which is due from and is given by the Colonies to the mother country, and which in no respect counterbalances the contribution of the mother country to the Colonies, given equally with freedom and with generosity, in bearing the whole burden of the naval, military, and diplomatic services. Whatever the Colonies give in this respect is no more than counterbalancing, or is less than counterbalancing, the mother country's contribution to those services. I believe it is so regarded by the Colonies themselves; and I am certain that, in the opinion of the wisest statesmen among them, it would be considered a calamity if these preferences were adduced as a reason for the people of Great Britain abandoning the path on which they have been long embarked—of what we call free trade, though I am told that that is a misnomer—for abandoning the path on which this country has prospered, unless it were for reasons particular to these islands; and because it was thought that their prosperity could be better advanced under another system.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords, the noble Earl expressed regret that there was not in this House any representative of Mr. Chamberlain to express his views. I join with the noble Earl in that regret. Although I am not here to give expression to the views which Mr. Chamberlain holds, and which he has put before the country, I may perhaps be allowed to take part in this discussion, inasmuch as I had the honour and the advantage of being associated with Mr. Chamberlain at the Colonial Office at the time when the Colonial Conference of 1902 took place. In the first place, let me say that it was not at that Conference that the question of preferential trade was first brought forward. A Conference was held in 1900, and the "pious opinion," as the noble Earl calls it, was then expressed that preferential trade between the Colonies and the mother country would tend to bind the Empire more closely together. Since that time the Colonies have developed the preferences which they now grant to the mother country, and it was in 1901 and 1902 that the question of inviting the mother country to give reciprocal preferences to the Colonies was brought forward actively by the representatives of the Colonies.

Your Lordships will remember that an import duty was placed upon wheat here; and although there is not in the archives of the Colonial Office the record which the noble Earl hoped my noble friend the Under-Secretary might produce, I know, as a matter of fact, that the high Commissioner of Canada, Lord Strathcona, was at that time incessant in his pressure upon the Home Government that they should give some preference to Canada, and in his assurance Canada would be willing to increase her preference in return. I cannot for the life of me understand how noble Lords opposite have got it into their heads that the Colonies have never asked for a preference from the mother country and have never offered any advantages to the mother country in return. The fact is patent in the proceedings of the Conference which took place before 1902, and is a matter of common knowledge in the Colonies. I do not want to dwell upon that any further, except to say that to my mind it is as plain and as clear as daylight.

The noble Earl has made a great deal of the speech of Mr. Chamberlain at the Colonial Conference, in which he pointed out the small effect that the preference granted by Canada had had upon the trade between the two countries. Mr. Chamberlain, at that time, was very anxious to obtain from the Colonies some sort of undertaking, not only for a preference, but that they would adopt as a policy the ideal of free trade within the Empire. I know that that is impracticable in the immediate future, but I cannot help hoping that it is an ideal which some of the younger Members of your Lordships' House may live to see realised. The preference which Canada gave to this country, although it may not have fulfilled all that was expected of it, has at any rate made a very material difference in our trade with Canada. In the first place, your Lordships are well aware that the prosperity of Canada has been unexampled in recent years, and therefore it is not unnatural that its trade, not only with the mother country, but with the United States of America and Continental countries, should have alike materially increased. As Mr. Chamberlain himself pointed out, in a later speech than that referred to by the noble Earl, before granting us a preference our trade with Canada had practically fallen from 40 per cent. to 23½ per cent., in the last two years that trade has been gradually climbing up again and reached in 1902, 26½ per cent. In other words, before the preference was granted the trade between the United Kingdom and Canada was steadily going down, but the moment preference was granted it began to climb up until it is now £11,000,000.

I do not wish to detain your Lordships at any length, but I must be permitted to refer to the observations that fell from the noble Earl on the Cross Benches to the effect that the opinion of Australians was not to be measured by the utterances of Mr. Deakin, the Prime Minister. Well, my Lords, one naturally looks to the utterances of the Prime Minister of a country as an indication of the views of those who support him. The noble Earl read an extract from a speech of the Leader of the Opposition. I suppose we may, at any rate, take it that an expression of opinion of the Leader of the Opposition and of the Prime Minister taken together may very fairly be regarded as representing the views of any particular country. Although the Australian Prime Minister was not prepared to do more than give a certain amount of preference to this country by raising the duties on imports from foreign countries, the Leader of the Opposition was prepared to go a great deal further and to lower the duties on imports into Australia from this country while maintaining them at their present level against foreign countries. I think the opinion of those two gentlemen may fairly be held to represent the opinion of Australia as a whole. Although His Majesty's Government are not inviting the country to carry out the proposals which Mr. Chamberlain has placed before it, this I do say, that when the Colonies have solemnly and formally brought under the notice of the Government a policy which, in their opinion, will tend to bind together the different parts of the Empire, that proposal ought not to be treated, as I am afraid it has been treated in some quarters, with contempt and ridicule.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: No, no!

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: I said in some quarters. I do not say it has been treated in that way by the noble Earl. I think proposals of that kind deserve the most careful and earnest consideration of all Parties in this country, and I sincerely hope that your Lordships, whatever view you may take of it, will at any rate make up your minds to give it careful and respectful consideration and will not reject the proposals as something wholly impracticable.

LORD BRASSEY: My Lords, having served five years in Australia as a colleague of my noble friend Lord Beauchamp, and having taken part in the Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire, held in Montreal last August, I am able to give to your Lordships some further information, at first hand, as to the views held by responsible Ministers in the Colonies. When I went out to Australia I knew that Mr. Chamberlain had in his view the policy of preferential tariffs. I took every opportunity of discussing the question with Sir George Turner, then the Premier of Victoria, and now the Finance Minister of the Commonwealth. I consulted with the Ministers of other Australian Governments. The protectionist colonies were not prepared to lower their duties on British goods. Preference could only be given by increasing the duties on foreign goods. Australian opinion remains unchanged under the Commonwealth. In the recent elections the Labour party have gained. They insist on protection for home industries. The speeches made by Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his colleagues at the Congress of Chambers of Commerce, held last August in Montreal, are perhaps the most important declarations by colonial Ministers in Canada since our fiscal policy has been under discussion. No reductions of tariffs are proposed by Sir Wilfrid Laurier; he said it would take him too far into politics. Reductions are strongly opposed by Canadian manufacturers. They were represented at Montreal by Mr. Ellis, ex-president of their association, who said—

> "I wish to say that, as far as the manufacturers are concerned, we believe we have gone far enough; and we will oppose strenuously any reduction in the present duties, or any increase in the preference, unless there is a corresponding increase in the duties."

In justice to Canadian Ministers, it should be said that they did not press the mother country to make sacrifices for which no compensation could be given.

At Montreal, Mr. Fisher, Minister of Agriculture, made an important speech, in which he said—

> "Let me say one more thing, and I say it to the guests from the motherland. The sum of agricultural success in Canada is the purchasing power of the masses of the old land. It is to your markets that we send our surplus. It is through the money received from you that we are prosperous beyond the aspirations of our people a few years ago. Anything you do to interfere with the purchasing power of your people would be the deadliest blow at Canada that you could strike. No preference that you could give in your market would make up to us for the decrease in the purchasing power of your people."

While Australia and Canada remain protectionist, a bargain with the mother country on terms of mutual advantage is impossible. The case was plainly put in my hearing by Lord Salisbury some years ago. In reply to a deputation from the Empire Trade League, Lord Salisbury said—

> "If you give preferential treatment to your colonies, it must be that you tax the similar goods from the rest of the world; and that the Colonies are to command a better price for their goods than they would obtain under unrestrained competition. A better price for the vendor means a more disagreeable price for the consumer; and we have yet to receive proof of this country being in favour of a policy of preferential taxes on wheat, on corn, and on wool."

We have had no such proof at the late elections. In some degree the mutual obligations of the mother country and her colonies depend on their relative resources and burdens. The proceedings of the Conference at Montreal were recorded in a Blue-book. On the outer page there was the advertisement of the Canadian Commissioner for Emigration. The headlines stated—

> "Plenty of room in Canada for the workers. One hundred and sixty acres of the best land in the world given free. A greater available food-producing area than in any other country. Farming in Canada pays. Trade more than doubled in seven years."

Can we say that it is as well with us as with Canada? And we are generous to our colonies. We are beyond comparison their largest customers, and we impose no duties. The self-governing Colonies put high duties on imports from the mother country. If we look to the varying conditions—position, climate, products, population—unrestricted freedom for all the self-governing States must be our wisest fiscal policy. The difficulties of tariff-making for the Australian Commonwealth should be a warning against more ambitious endeavours. The main stream of our colonial trade sets towards India, where no protective duties are imposed, and to other possessions where no manufactures are established. With our self-governing Colonies of Canada and Australia, in which industries similar to our own, and necessarily competitors, are coming into existence, and where we already have the lion's share of their external trade in goods which we are able to supply, the true bonds are the racial sympathies, felt most strongly in the hour of stress and strain. There are, I submit, better methods of attaining the object we all have at heart. Let us be helpful to our colonies on every suitable opportunity. Swift communications are a bond of Empire. We might be more liberal in subsidies to ocean telegraphs and mail services. We might give aid, by Imperial guarantees, to the construction of main lines of railway, which would open up new territories for settlement, and accelerate the transit of mails. And among the means by which the unity of the Empire can be strengthened, no methods perhaps are more telling than those acts of public and private recognition which Mr. Chamberlain has never neglected.

*VISCOUNT GOSCHEN: My Lords, I desire to say one or two words with reference to some observations which fell from the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture. He spoke of the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia as, naturally from the position that he occupied, being the proper mouthpiece of the majority of the people of Australia. But, as I think my noble friend Lord Rosebery remarked, there are three Parties in the Commonwealth Parliament, and not one of those Parties is in a majority. Roughly speaking the Ministerialists are one-third, the Opposition are one-third, and the Labour Members make up the other third, so that really there is no majority of which the Prime Minister is the respesentative. That is the information which has reached me. Then with reference to Mr. Reid, he is undoubtedly in favour of a certain preference to the mother country, but what he would infinitely prefer is free trade within the

Empire. He is a distinct free-trader, and therefore, if preference is to be given at all, he would prefer a preference by lowering the tariff, and keeping it as it is against the foreigners rather than by raising the tariff against the foreigners, and keeping it as it is against British maufacturers. He is not in favour of the preferential system, because that system would block what is his aspiration, namely, free trade within the Empire. Mr. Reid is an opponent of the preferential system, and he has expressed himself most apprehensive lest the present movement in favour of protection in this country should have a damaging effect upon the efforts of the free-trade Party in Australia, and who look to the free-trade Party in this country as their allies, towards whom they may ultimately gravitate, when they can make more impression on the people in Australia.

But I am ready to admit that there is a distinct leaning in Canada towards preference; and I should think there is a majority in favour of preference in Australia. That I think we may admit; and I entirely subscribe to what fell from my noble friend Lord Onslow in his concluding observations, that this is certainly not a matter which can be brushed aside with contempt in this country. Any approaches by the Colonies in this direction ought to be treated by all Parties with the greatest respect and consideration. It would be deplorable if by the heat of Party strife in this country the Colonies should get the impression that this country was deaf and blind to any desire they might express. If it be true at all that the advances of the Colonies have been treated with scorn in this country, that feeling must be confined to a very small section of the population, and certainly it has not been expressed by any responsible statesman. One of the things which many of us have deplored is that this question of fiscal policy should have drifted into the sphere of Party; and that, therefore, expressions should have been used which are open to misconstruction. But I think the great bulk of the people of this country—divided as we are upon the subject of preference—wish to approach the question with the desire solely to adopt the best system for strengthening the bonds that exist between the Colonies and ourselves. What we differ upon is this—whether preference might not have an effect very different from that which its authors desire. It has been said over and over again by men who have been connected with the Colonies, and therefore competent to judge, that preference would lead rather to friction than to a closer union, and that the bonds which bind us together are strong enough now, and do not need the support of a system of preference.

The impression conveyed to the public by the speeches of Mr. Chamberlain was that definite offers had been made by the Colonies. It is now clear that no definite offers have been made by the Colonies, except perhaps in the case of Canada, which has expressed the opinion that it was desirable that a system of preference should be established. But, be that as it may, we now know from the utterances of the leading men of Canada and Australia that it was not in accordance with fact to say that we were at the parting of the ways, that the moment had come when we must either accept or reject the advances of the Colonies, and that if we rejected them the union of the Empire was doomed. Mr. Chamberlain did not put the position less strongly than that. The statement was resented by a large portion of the British public, who regarded it as a slur upon the Colonies. Now we gather from the speeches of Ministers and from the attitude of the Government, that they dissent from that proposition of Mr. Chamberlain. They have not adopted his policy. They may possibly submit it to the country at some future time; but at present it is not their policy. I should like to hear from my noble friend the Leader of the House whether he is prepared to say that the advances made by the Colonies have put us in the position that we must either accept them, or reject them at the risk of the unity of the Empire.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, if we who sit on this Bench were not a long-suffering people, we might be almost entitled to protest against being, night after night, called upon to defend a policy of colonial preference which we have been at great pains to explain to your Lordships that we did not intend to offer to Parliament, and which, indeed, we have said we would go the length of opposing if at this moment it were proposed to us. The two speeches of the late Colonial Secretary which have been referred to in this debate were said, and said with perfect accuracy, to have referred to an offer advanced by the Colonies; and the question which we are now asked to debate is whether there was such an offer, and, if so, what was its nature. After considering the different passages in this Blue-book which have been quoted at length during this discussion, it seems to me impossible to arrive at any conclusion but that something which may not be unfairly described in general terms as an offer, has been made by the Colonies. The noble Earl on the Cross Benches said that those expressions meant nothing more than a pious and patriotic opinion; but I am bound to say that, if the language of the representatives of the Colonies is to be interpreted in the ordinary manner, we must find in them a good deal more than a pious and patriotic opinion. I do not by that mean for a moment to suggest that the Colonies have collectively made to us the offer of a specific and detailed proposal for an arrangement of tariffs concerning the whole of the Empire. It is quite obvious that they are not in a position at present to make such a proposal, any more than we are in a position to entertain such a proposal. But when you find that the leading men in those great Colonies have time after time expressed a distinct desire that commercial arrangements of this kind should be brought into existence between the mother country and the Colonies, and when, in addition to that, you find them actually giving to us, as an earnest of their intentions, substantial and valuable preferences, I think we may fairly say, without being accused of misdescription, that the Colonies have made to us an offer of preferential treatment. That is an offer which I am bound to say —as I believe Mr. Chamberlain stated— it would be criminal altogether to neglect.

There is one passage in the Blue-book which seems to me so distinct that I will venture to quote it. The Canadian Ministers stated that if they could be assured that—

> "The Imperial Government would accept the principle of preferential trade generally, and particularly grant to the food products of Canada exemption from duties now levied or hereafter imposed, they would be prepared to go further into the subject and endeavour to give to the British manufacturer some increased advantage over his foreign competitors in the markets of Canada."

If that proposal is not worthy of being described as an offer, I do not know what an offer is. We on this Bench are not, and have never pretended to be, supporters of Mr. Chamberlain's policy, nor can we be made responsible for utterances of his, particularly those which he has delivered since he has ceased to be a member of the Government. But it is, on the other hand, due to him that he should not be misrepresented if we are able to correct the misrepresentation. We hold that an offer, or call it, if you please, an overture, has certainly been made to us by the Colonies; and all of us who, like the noble Earl on the Cross Benches, desire that the Empire should be preserved, and that its constituent parts should be drawn more closely together, all of us who are ready, as he is, to make sacrifices for the sake of that great object, desire that that overture should be treated respectfully. But we certainly realise that it is necessary that this great and far-reaching question should be dealt with, as Lord Goschen suggested, with the utmost deliberation; nor do we for a moment believe that because it is treated with deliberation and in a leisurely manner there is any prospect of the loyalty and allegiance of the Colonies being shaken or undergoing any change. When Mr. Chamberlain used the words which the noble Lord quoted I imagine that what he had in his mind was the effect which would be produced on the Colonies if this offer, as I desire to call it, were to be hurriedly and disrespectfully put on one side. I do believe that if that had been our attitude towards it the effect produced on the minds of the Colonies would have been a most disastrous one. I therefore very much associate myself with what fell from Lord Goschen, I desire as much as he does that this question should be carefully examined—and obviously it needs examination, not only with reference to its bearings on the Colonies, but with reference to its bearings on our own commercial interests. It is clear that both those aspects of the case stand in need of thorough examination, and it is because we realise that that examination must take time, and that it is absolutely impossible to say at this moment what the result of such examination may ultimately be—it is for that reason that we have declined as a Government to incorporate in our commercial policy those particular proposals which are associated with the name of Mr. Chamberlain.

EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I do not desire to enter at any length into the interesting discussion which has taken place. I entirely sympathise with what was said by the noble Viscount opposite. Lord Goschen drew attention to the very remarkable words of the late Secretary of State for the Colonies in regard to this matter, and particularly to his statement that if regard was not paid to the distinct desire of the Colonies for a preference the result would be serious—that, in fact, it would be criminal to neglect the offer. The noble Marquess, though he says that at the present moment His Majesty's Government do not accept the policy of preference, admits that it would be criminal to neglect the offer which was made.

***THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE**: To treat it otherwise than respectfully.

EARL SPENCER: I certainly think it would be extremely wrong to disregard a desire on the part of the Colonies, and none of my noble friends have treated such a matter with scorn, as Lord Onslow, I think, seemed to suggest. But this question has to be considered not only from the point of view of the Colonies, but of this country, and there are great interests at stake. With regard to the Colonies themselves, their view as expressed at the Conference was that in the present circumstances it was not practicable to adopt a general system of free trade as between them and the mother country. The noble Marquess considers that a definite offer had been made.

***THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE**: I am very sorry to interrupt the noble Earl, but I did not use the word "definite."

EARL SPENCER: If he did not use the word definite, the noble Marquess said there was a distinct offer, but as far as I can see there has been nothing but the expression of a pious opinion on the part of the Conference. The proposals made were entirely conditional on this country making some offer, of advantage to the Colonies, which the Government could not make under the present fiscal system. I have always held that this question of preference raises the whole question of a tariff, for without a general tariff it would be impossible to make an offer to the Colonies. In view of the Canadian expression of opinion cited by Lord Brassey, it is clear that it would be extremely improbable that a definite offer could be made by the Canadians. I regret that the Government have not stated their views more definitely, for if the system of preferences were carried out we should fall into direct protection, which would result in deplorable disaster to our commerce.

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

House adjourned at a quarter before Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 3rd March, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz. :—Metropolitan Common Scheme (Farnborough) Provisional Order Bill; Metropolitan Common Scheme (Hillingdon East) Provisional Order Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to, Dumbarton Tramways Order Confirmation Bill, without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to make further provisions for the foundation of a Dean and Chapter of Newcastle; and for other purposes connected therewith." [Newcastle Chapter (Amendment) Bill [Lords.]

PETITIONS.

LICENCE HOLDERS.

Petition from Tynemouth, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Bath (two); Oldham; Birmingham; Manchester; Ingatestone; Skegness; Westminster; Skewan; Dolgelley; Renton; Church Cresley; Salisbury; Heckmondwike; Llanelly (two); Sunderland; Corwen; Reeth; Hastings; Bucklow Hill; Maentwrog Uchaf; Birmingham; Stretford; Hunwick; St. Ives; Field Road; Bridgnorth Queensbury; Forest Gate; Stratford; Maentwrog Isaf; Shipley; Windhill (two); Saltaire; Barnstaple; Kingsbridge; Spalding; Torquay; Salford Dock; Woodleigh Waterfoot; Rawtenstall (two); Crawshawbooth (two); Waterfoot; Lumb in Rossendale; Sunnyside; Clowbridge; Hareholme; Goodshaw; Cloughfold; Newchurch; Cumberworth; Newark; Bethania; Nottingham; Isleham; Whitby; Tollington Park; Snodland; Llandudno; Chesterton; and Seaton Delaval; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOUR ORDINANCE).

Petitions for withdrawal; from Heckmondwike; and Paisley; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Fifty-third Report from the Church Estates Commissioners for the year preceding 1st March, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF DORSET.)

Copy presented, of Order made by the county council of the county of Dorset altering certain Polling Districts in the Northern Parliamentary Division [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (CONTINUATION CLASSES).

Copy presented, of Code of Regulations for Continuation Classes providing further instruction for those who have left school, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAY, ETC., BILLS.

Return presented, relative thereto (ordered 2nd March: *Mr. Gerald Balfour*); to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 81.]

DEATHS FROM STARVATION OR ACCELERATED BY PRIVATION (LONDON).

Address for "Return of the number of all deaths in the Administrative County of London, in the year 1903, upon which a coroner's jury has returned a verdict of Death from Starvation or Death accelerated by Privation, together with any observations furnished to the Local Government Board by Boards of Guardians with reference to cases included in the Return (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 279, of Session 1903)."—(*Mr. Talbot.*)

BRITISH MUSEUM.

Copy ordered, "of Account of the Income and Expenditure of the British Museum (Special Trust Funds) for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1904; and Return of the number of persons admitted to visit the Museum and the British Museum (Natural History) in each year from 1898 to 1903, both years inclusive; together with a statement of the progress made in the arrangement and description of the collections, and an account of objects added to them in the year 1903."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

FOREIGN TRADE AND COMMERCE.

Copy ordered, "of Monthly Accounts relating to the Trade and Commerce of certain foreign countries and British possessions."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 82.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Belfast Revaluation Appeals.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether, in view of the delay in the publication of the revaluation lists of Belfast, he can arrange that the appeals lodged on the 8th February last shall be delayed until Parliament has determined the proper Court of Appeal which would be applicable to the whole county.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) There was no delay in the publication of the revaluation lists which were issued in 1901, but cannot come into force before March, 1905. The appeals to quarter sessions were lodged before 29th February, 1904. I cannot give an undertaking such as suggested, but I am looking into the matter.

Cultivation of Cotton in German Colonies.

SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will ascertain whether the cost of the steps which are being taken by the German Colonial Committee, in order to establish and extend the cultivation of cotton in German Colonies, and which are described in detail in the Board of Trade Journal of 25th February, 1904, is being borne by the State or by private individuals.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The experiments are paid for by the Colonial Scientific Committee, which obtains all its funds partly from subscriptions and partly from the proceeds of lotteries. The German Government grants no direct financial aid.

German Inquiry into "Dumping."

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government have any information as to the result of the inquiry, stated by His Majesty's Consul at Frankfort in his last report to be then about to be held, in consequence of complaints received by the German Government of the effects on German trade of the action of trusts and cartels in selling surplus stocks of raw materials and partly manufactured goods in foreign markets at lower prices than those required of German consumers of such goods.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) A summary of the proceedings of the Commission of Inquiry down to June last is given in the Blue-book on British and foreign trade and industry issued by the Board of Trade, pages 333 to 342 [Cd. 1761].

Imports of Salted Herrings by Germany.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the amount of salted herrings imported by Germany during the years 1901, 1902, and, if possible, 1903, showing how much of these imports came respectively from Britain, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and other countries.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The following is the information desired by the hon. Member:—

	1901.	1902.	1903.
	Barrels.	Barrels.	Barrels.
Imports (for Home consumption) from—			
United Kingdom	664,315	753,101	599,247
Holland	371,173	451,443	533,664
Norway	153,270	195,108	110,387
Sweden	10,878	10,635	7,214
Denmark	973	3,111	201,891
Other Countries	165,165	159,119	
	1,365,774	1,572,517	1,452,403

The figures for 1903 are provisional.

Breakage of Steel Rails in the United Kingdom.

Mr. RANDLES (Cumberland, Cockermouth): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has any official information showing the percentage of breakage of rails on railways in the United Kingdom made from steel manufactured by the basic and the Bessemer acid processes, respectively; and, if not, will he institute inquiries as to the comparative safety of rails made by the two methods.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I have no information as to the percentage of breakage of rails manufactured by the basic and the Bessemer acid processes respectively, and I do not think such an inquiry as is suggested would lead to any useful result. I may add that accidents from broken rails are of rare occurrence. The hon. Member is no doubt aware of the Report of a Committee on Steel Rails (1900, C. 174).

Inquiry into Sources of Iron Ore Supplies.

Mr. RANDLES: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has completed his inquiry as to sources of iron ore supplies; and, if so, will he lay upon the Table the results of his inquiry.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) A large amount of information has been received, but there are still a certain number of reports outstanding. I propose to lay upon the Table, as soon as practicable, a Report based upon the information already obtained.

Exports of United Kingdom to Protected Countries.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY: To ask the President of the Board of Trade when it will be possible to give the total for 1903 of values of exports of manufactured and partly manufactured goods from the United Kingdom to principal protected foreign countries, in continuation of, and on the same basis as, the figures given at pages 21–2 of the Blue-book, Cd. 1761.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) It will not be possible to give the figures referred to by my right hon. friend before the completion of the "Annual Statement of Trade" for 1903, that is, for some months yet. The value of the total exports of British produce and manufactures to the "principal protected foreign countries," included in the Memorandum referred to, was £106,000,000 in 1903, compared with £104,700,000 in 1902.

Amount paid to Foreign Firms for Telephone Instruments.

Mr. JOHN CAMPBELL (Armagh, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he can state the sum expended on telephone instruments in connection with the new system up to date; how much of this amount has been spent on instruments manufactured in England and how much on instruments manufactured in Sweden, Antwerp, and America; and whether he can give the patent number of the instruments which he is compelled to purchase from foreign firms.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The sum expended on telephone instruments for the new system in London could not be given without a careful analysis extending over four years, and this would involve much labour and expense. The amount expended on stores of all kinds for the telephone system of the whole country during the four years is £1,328,966. Of this amount about £176,500 was spent on articles manufactured abroad; but most of this was on account of central battery switchboards and their equipment, which are patented, the patent numbers being as follows: No. 20,099 (1890); 4,427 (1892); 4,428 (1892); 17,160 (1892); 3,831 (1893); 9,638 (1893); 8,222 (1895); 11,548 (1895); 11,549 (1895); 18,613 (1898); 6,712 (1899); 24,718 (1899); 10,124 (1900). Telephones for the use of subscribers have had to be obtained from abroad from time to time because they could not be obtained in this country; but I am glad to say that British companies are now prepared to manufacture them, and I hope I shall be able to reduce more and more the amount spent with foreign manufacturers.

Relations of Post Office to National Telephone Company.

Mr. JOHN CAMPBELL: To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the recent report of the National Telephone Company in which the chairman states that they are working in partnership with the Post Office; if so, whether he will state when the present partnership with the National Telephone Company expires, and what are the arrangements made for taking over their business; and whether, in view of the increasing business of the National Telephone Company, he will endeavour to expedite the completion of the new Post Office system.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The statement made by the chairman of the National Telephone Company had reference, probably, to the arrangement made in 1901 for free intercommunication between the exchange systems of the Post Office and the company in London. This arrangement has proved to be a great convenience to the large body of telephone users in the London area. It will continue until the termination of the company's licence. The company are bound at the expiration of the licence to sell to the Post Office their plant in the London area at a valuation on what are known as "tramway" terms. As soon as funds have been provided under the Bill which I hope shortly to obtain leave to introduce, the development of the London telephone service by the Post Office will be expedited as much as possible.

Publication of Civil Service Estimates.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury when the Civil Service Estimates will be in the hands of Members.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) Some of the classes will be circulated this week and the remainder in the course of next week.

Dismissals from Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he can state the number of men belonging to the Royal Irish Constabulary who have been dismissed from 1st April, 1897, to 1st September, 1900, and the number from 1st September, 1900, to 1st February, 1904.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) In the first-mentioned period the number of men dismissed was 101 and the number discharged for misconduct 108; total 209. In the second period the number dismissed was 129 and the number discharged seventy-five; total 204. The statistics of other punishments for indiscipline in the force show a very considerable reduction in the period that has elapsed since the present Inspector-General assumed command on the 1st September, 1900, as compared with the corresponding period prior to that date.

Exclusion of Press from Constabulary Courts of Inquiry.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he can state the number of Constabulary Courts of Inquiry held within the past ten years from which the Press have been excluded; and what were the reasons for excluding representatives of the Press.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) This information will be procured and communicated to my hon. friend.

Hearing of Appeals to head Land Commission in County Tipperary.

MR. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he can state whether a time and place has as yet been fixed for the hearing of the appeals to the head Land Commission from the county of Tipperary which had been fixed, some time since, for hearing in Waterford on the 22nd instant but were struck off the list.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) No arrangements have yet been made for the hearing of the appeals referred to.

Valuation of Publicans in Belfast.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that the deputation of the Belfast licensed vintners that waited on the Commissioner of Valuation for Ireland in September, 1901, had relation only to that year's annual revision, where some twenty-six publicans' valuations were dealt with in a particular district; that the Commissioner then arranged to hear the several cases in the council chamber of the town hall on 7th October, 1901, and with one exception set them back to the original valuation; and that an interview of one member of the licensed vintners, without authority from the general body, has been taken by the Commissioner to comply with the undertaking to arrange interviews with public bodies in Belfast; and, if so, can he take steps to secure that the Commissioner will now interview the Belfast publicans before their cases are decided at quarter sessions, and try to come to some amicable understanding without involving appellants in legal expenses.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Commissioner of Valuation is prepared to arrange for an interview with a deputation of the Belfast publicans at an early date, and will communicate with the secretary of that body for the purpose.

South African War—Officers' Gratuities.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether, in view of the fact that in respect to the South African War a regimental captain appointed as staff lieutenant would get £60, the captain's gratuity, a regimental lieutenant appointed a local captain would get £60, being the benefit under the Army Order No. 5 of 1901, but that a regimental lieutenant appointed both a local captain and a staff lieutenant would get only £27 10s., although as a staff officer he would have more responsibility than as a regimental local captain, instructions will be given to rectify this apparent inequality.

(*Answered by Mr. Bromley-Davenport.*) If the hon. Member will be good enough to furnish the details of any such cases as those mentioned in the latter part of the Question, they shall be inquired into.

Private John Duite, Leinster Regiment.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the case of Private John Duite, Leinster Regiment No. 5674, now a prisoner in Maryborough Gaol, serving a term of five years penal servitude for being engaged in a military riot in Pretoria last year; and whether, in view of the age and circumstances of this man's parents, he will have his case taken into consideration with a view to having his punishment ameliorated if his conduct has been good during his imprisonment.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster*). This man participated in an armed meeting at Pretoria of an exceedingly grave character which resulted in the death of one of his comrades and the wounding of two others by rifle bullets. He was sentenced to five years' penal servitude on 14th May, 1903. The case has been carefully considered, and it has been decided to let the law follow its ordinary course, in accordance with which he may obtain such remission of his sentence as is accorded by prison rules to a man who conducts himself well whilst in confinement.

Military Expenditure.

MR. FULLER (Wiltshire, Westbury): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the total normal military expenditure of this country in each of the financial years 1895–6, 1898–9, 1901–2, 1902–3, 1903–4, 1904–5, including Supplementary Votes and expenditure under Military Works Acts.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The normal military expenditure for these years is as follows:—

Year.	Expenditure on Estimates apart from War.	Expenditure under Military Loans.	Total Expenditure (apart from War) including Loans.
	£	£	£
1895–6	18,470,535	619,579	19,090,114
1898–9	20,096,373	947,423	21,043,796
1901–2	25,528,574	1,749,487	30,278,061
1902–3	28,716,627	1,622,294	30,378,921
1903–4	29,800,000	3,600,000	33,400,000
1904–5	28,830,000	—	28,830,000

Military Expenditure and Recruits.

Mr. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the total number of recruits, excluding colonial forces, and the total military expenditure for each year since 1896.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The number of recruits for each year since 1896 are as follow :—1897, 33,722; 1898, 38,418; 1899, 40,207; 1900, ordinary recruits, 47,700; §enlistments of all classes, 96,801; 1901, ordinary recruits, 45,157; §enlistments of all classes, 73,769; 1902, ordinary recruits, 50,753; §enlistments of all classes, 64,116; 1903, ordinary recruits, 40,339; §enlistments of all classes, 41,789.

The total military expenditure for each year since 1896 is as follows :—

Year.	Expenditure on Votes.¶		Total.	Expenditure on Works Loans.	Total Expenditure.
	Apart from War.	On War.			
	£	£	£	£	£
1896–97 .	18,156,520	—	18,156,520	456,787	18,613,307 (96–97)
1897–98 .	19,528,390	—	19,528,390	819,132	20,347,522 (97–98)
1898–99 .	20,096,373	—	20,096,373	974,423	21,043,796 (98–99)
1899–00 .	20,275,398	22,790,000	43,065,398	1,216,207	44,281,605 (99–00)
1900–01 .	26,082,544	65,261,000	91,343,544	1,285,772	92,629,316 (00–01)
1901–02 .	28,528,574	64,132,300	92,660,874	1,749,487	94,410,361 (01–02)‡
1902–03 .	28,716,627	40,146,900	68,863,527	1,662,294	70,525,821 (02–03)
1903–04 ,	29,800,000	7,145,000	36,945,000	3,600,000	40,545,000 (03–04)
904–05 .	28,830,000	—†	28,830,000	—	28,830,000 (04–05)

Appointment of Acting Director of Army Contracts.

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the Report of Lord Esher's Committee, he will withhold his consent from confirming the appointment of the Acting Director of Army Contracts in succession to Mr. Major, whose appointment expires next month on completing forty years service.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The future appointments of the Civil Staff of the War Office will be dealt with by the Army Council after the Report of the Committee has been approved.

New Army Scheme—Troops at Salisbury Plain.

Mr. WALTER PALMER (Salisbury): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state how the proposals under the new Army Scheme will affect the number and disposition of the troops in the neighbourhood of Salisbury throughout the year; and whether it is intended to retain the present headquarters at Salisbury.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) I am not yet in a position to reply to this Question.

Chinese Labour in the Transvaal—Opposition of Natives.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): To ask the Secretary of State

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Enlistments during South African War excluding Colonial Corps recruits and including recruits enlisted for one year's service or the duration of the war, ex-soldiers re-enlisted, and garrison regiments.

¶ As in Army Estimates.

† The expenditure during 1904-5 on the Military Works Loan cannot at present be estimated.

‡ The figures in the first column from 1901–02 onwards include expenditure under the "Mowatt" programme for Reserves of Stores, &c.

for the Colonies whether he has had any information as to a meeting of natives in the Transvaal, said to have been held early in February last, at which strong opposition was displayed to the Ordinance for the importation of Chinese labour.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I have received no information as to this meeting, but if the right hon. Gentleman will furnish me with particulars I will telegraph inquiries.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Royal Visitors to Gibraltar and Malta.

MR. PIERPOINT (Warrington): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, when a foreign potentate visits Gibraltar or Malta, he and his staff, or any of them, are allowed to inspect any parts of the fortifications which we do not usually show to ordinary visitors; and whether the Governors of Gibraltar and Malta have instructions on the matter.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The Sovereign of any friendly country will be gladly welcomed at Gibraltar or Malta, but it is obvious that such a visitor could not be asked to inspect any portion of the fortifications which it is considered necessary to withhold from the inspection of foreigners, nor is there any reason to anticipate that any such request is likely to be made.

Royal West Kent Regiment.

SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how the arrangements are made for the foreign service of regiments; whether the Royal West Kent Regiment, now under orders to leave for Malta this month, returned to England in the winter of 1902–3, after twenty-one years continuous service abroad, including the Egyptian campaign of 1881, the Nile campaign of 1884, and the North-west India campaign of 1897–8; and why some other regiment with a shorter record of foreign service has not been selected.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: As I have already explained to the House in reply to a similar Question concerning another regiment†, owing to the present exigencies of the service more than half of the battalions of the line are required abroad, and it has accordingly been found necessary to curtail the period of home service. The claims of the various battalions who have been selected to proceed abroad have been most carefully weighed, and I am afraid that it is impossible to amend the selection without unfairness to others. I may add that the period of foreign service for individual men is in many cases very short, as a portion of their Colour service is with the battalion at home.

Expenditure on Barrack Accommodation in South Africa.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what is the amount already spent and estimated to be spent in building permanent accommodation for troops in South Africa.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The figures are as follows:—Actual expenditure out of Army Votes (up to 31st March, 1903), £1,028,000; estimated expenditure out of Military Works Loan, from 1st April, 1903, to 31st March, 1904, £1,230,000; from 1st April, 1904, to 31st March, 1905, £1,075,000. Total, £3,333,000. The above total will, it is anticipated, complete the permanent accommodation for the force to be maintained in South Africa. As a set off against the above total, there will be the amount to be realised by the sale of the main barracks at Capetown.

Army Reorganisation.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what is the size of the force intended by the new Army scheme to be kept ready for expeditionary purposes abroad without calling out Reserves.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No new scheme for the Army has been put forward; consequently no change has been made in the existing arrangements for the despatch of an expeditionary force.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix., 335.

Military Works Acts Expenditure.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will say what the estimate is for expenditure under the Military Works Acts for the year 1904–5.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am not in a position to give the information asked for at the present time.

Indian Reliefs.

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state the number of men under a three years engagement now serving in India, as well as those with the same engagement under orders for India during the present trooping season.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The number of non-extended three years' men serving in India is 447. The number under orders for and on passage to India is 3,660.

Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

*Mr. AINSWORTH (Argyll): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the 91st Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders has not been quartered in Scotland for some years, and that since their return from South Africa they have been quartered at Longmoor, Aldershot; and whether he will arrange that this battalion may be quartered in that portion of the United Kingdom to which it belongs.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The hon. Member has been misinformed. This battalion was quartered in Edinburgh from March, 1892, to June, 1894, and at Glasgow from September, 1896, to August, 1898. Considering that there are only three stations in Scotland for ten Scottish regiments, this battalion would appear to have had a very fair share of home service in Scotland.

*Mr. AINSWORTH: I shall draw attention to this matter on the Estimates.

British Fleet in the Far East.

Sir THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the strength of our naval forces in the Far East.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk Woodbridge): The strength of the Fleet in the Far East at present is:—five battleships; four first-class cruisers; four second-class cruisers; one third-class cruiser; eight sloops and gunboats; nine destroyers; twelve river gunboats and special service ships; four torpedo boats.

Naval Protection of Fishery Grounds.

*Mr. AINSWORTH: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is prepared to employ a sufficient number of gunboats or other suitable vessels to patrol the fishing grounds of the United Kingdom and to prevent the infringement of the three-mile limit.

Mr. PRETYMAN: It is not possible to detail any vessels for the sole duty of patrolling the coasts of the United Kingdom in order to prevent the infringement of the three-mile limit, but there are a considerable number of gunboats and Coastguard cruisers which combine this work with their other necessary duties.

Land Settlement in the Transvaal.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what information he is in possession of as to the progress and position of the Transvaal Land Settlement Scheme, up to 30th June, 1903; and when he expects to be able to furnish the Return as to sum of money spent, number of settlers in actual agricultural occupation, and the number of holdings and total acreage allocated up to the present time.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington): A Return of 23rd July last laid upon the table of the Transvaal Legislative Council gave the amount of expenditure in connection with land settlement as £831,896, of which capital expenditure represented £718,955, and the number of settlers on the land 313. The report for which the Governor has been asked will be expedited as much as possible, but I am unable at present to give a definite date for its receipt.

Transvaal Labour Ordinance and Regulations.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can now say when the Ordinance and regulations for the introduction of indentured Chinese labour into the Transvaal Colony will be laid in their first complete and operative form.

Mr. LYTTELTON: I am unable to add anything to my reply to the same Question in answer to the hon. Member on the 25th February.†

China and the Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

Dr. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, at the conference between the Colonial and Foreign Offices, convened to determine certain matters in connection with the introduction of indentured Chinese labour into the Transvaal, the Chinese Minister took objection to the recruiting of coolies by agents from the Transvaal before the terms of the Ordinance and the form of the accompanying regulations had been settled as between the Chinese and British Governments; and, if so, whether any assurance was given that the recruiting of coolies for the purposes of the Ordinance would be discontinued until the first complete and operative form of the Ordinance and its regulations had been determined upon.

Mr. LYTTELTON: I must decline to make any statement with regard to the conference while the negotiations are proceeding.

Transvaal Labour Ordinance—Provision for Securing Labourers' Consent to Transfer.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Ordinance for the introduction of indentured Chinese labour into the Transvaal introduced into the Legislative Council, and which passed its Second Reading, contained a proviso (to Section 10) that no transfer of the contract of employment should be valid until the superintendent had satisfied himself that the labourer had given his consent thereto; whether this proviso was deleted during the passage of the Ordinance through Committee; on whose Motion these words were deleted, and whether the Attorney-General and the official members supported the Motion for their deletion; whether Lord Milner gave, or whether the Secretary of State asked for, any explanation of the omission of these words.

Mr. LYTTELTON: I think it best to refer the hon. Member to the further Papers which are to be published this afternoon, which will furnish a reply to all his Questions.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what provision has he made, and on what date did he make it, to secure that the transfer of the indentured Chinese labourer to another employer must be with the consent of the labourer himself; whether he will lay upon the Table any correspondence that he has had with Lord Milner with reference to this point; whether this security for the labourer will be inserted in the Ordinance itself or merely carried out by administrative regulations which are liable to be revoked at any time at the pleasure of the Lieutenant-Governor.

Mr. LYTTELTON: I have to refer the hon. Member to the Papers published to-day. The security will be provided by regulations. Obviously no alteration on such a point would take place without communication with the Secretary of State.

Sale of Intoxicants and Opium to Chinese Labourers.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the regulations relating to the Transvaal Labour Ordinance will contain special provisions with reference to the sale of ntoxicating liquors and prohibiting the sale of opium to the Chinese imported labourers, also whether, in view of the importance of the question of including in the regulations relating to the Ordinance such provisions, he will state when he will be in possession of Lord Milner's views on the subject; and whether Papers will be laid before the House containing the suggested new regulations before the final decision of the Government is arrived at.

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†See (4) *Debates*, cxxx. 977.

MR. LYTTELTON: I have to refer the hon. Member to my reply given yesterday to the similar Question of the Member for the Cleveland Division of Yorkshire.† Papers will be laid. I am unable to make any statement about the date.

Transvaal Indebtedness.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Transvaal Government will be able to meet its obligations in respect of the £35,000,000 borrowed last year without having resort to the Imperial guarantee.

MR. LYTTELTON: Lord Milner has written (p. 8 of Cd. 1899) that he can certainly avoid contribution from Imperial Exchequer during the present financial year, but that if he is compelled to rely for a much long period on about one-third of the available resources of the Transvaal he is unable to say what may happen afterwards.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): When does the financial year end?

MR. LYTTELTON: In June.

Cross River Trading.

MR. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that negotiations are taking place with certain associated firms at Old Calabar in respect of the conferring of trade privileges in the Cross River district; whether his attention has been called to representations from the Liverpool and Manchester Chambers of Commerce upon the subject; and, if so, will he say what steps he will take to secure that such privileges, if granted, will not constitute a monopoly of trade to the recipients.

MR. LYTTELTON: The Answers to the first and second Questions are in the affirmative. With regard to the third Question, I do not admit that the arrangement proposed would constitute a monopoly, but the matter is receiving further consideration, and I propose to communicate with the Chambers of Commerce again before coming to a final decision.

Southern Nigeria—Ibibio Expedition.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what is the exact objective of the expedition to the Ibibio country in the Southern Nigeria Protectorate consisting of 450 troops, with five Maxims and two pom-poms; whether the expedition was sanctioned by His Majesty's Government; and whether any official explanation has been received as to the causes of the alleged rising near Asaba, and of the measures taken to suppress it.

MR. LYTTELTON: The object of the patrol through the Ibibio district was to bring the country under Government control, to take away the war-guns and arms of precision in the possession of the natives, to open the country to trade, and to stop slave raiding. Many of the towns which were disarmed in the Aro expedition, and were consequently unable to defend themselves, have been raided by the Ibibios. The patrol was sanctioned by my predecessor. The force employed consisted of four small columns acting in concert, amounting to 430 rank and file in all, with four Maxims and two 75 millimetre guns. No detailed report has yet been received as to the disturbances in the neighbourhood of Asaba, but the district has a bad reputation for lawlessness, the inhabitants being terrorised by a society called the Ekumekus, who have given trouble on previous occasions by attacking the missionary stations situated in the country.

The Tibet Mission.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can state what are the instructions which have been given to Colonel Younghusband in regard to the Mission to Tibet; whether he can state what the expense of this Mission has been so far; and, whether it is intended to proceed by force in case the Government and people of Tibet should oppose the progress of the Mission.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxx., 1487.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The instructions given to Colonel Younghusband will be found at page 198 of the Blue-book. (2) I have received no accounts of the actual expenditure incurred, but the latest estimate of cost of the Mission to the end of the current financial year is £300,000. (3) The instructions to Colonel Younghusband are that he is not to take hostile action unless attacked, and I can make no statement on a question which has not yet arisen.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked whether all the instructions given to Colonel Younghusband were contained in the Blue-book, or whether any had been given to him since.

MR. BRODRICK: The instructions given to Colonel Younghusband are fully included in the Blue-book.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Has Colonel Younghusband been provided with an Army Corps?

[No answer was returned.]

MR. FLYNN (Cork County, N.): Has the right hon. Gentleman read page 210 of the said Blue-book?

[No reply was returned.]

British Central African Cotton Estates. Scarcity of Labour.

MR. EMMOTT (Oldham): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the fact that during the last wet season in British Central Africa, extending from November, 1903, to the present time, cotton estates have been left to go to weed, and work on the railway almost stopped, because sufficient labour was not available: and will he say whether the reports which the Foreign Office has received from officials in that country indicating that there is a surplus of labour, refer to the wet or the dry season; and whether there is any objection to laying the reports upon the Table of the House.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): The attention of His Majesty's Government has been called to the facts alluded to by the hon. Member, and in reply to our inquiries His Majesty's Commissioner reports as follows: That labour in the Protectorate is always scarce during the rainy season—from beginning of December to end of February—because during that period the natives cultivate their food crops. But it is not more scarce this season than it has been previously, and the emigration of a few thousand labourers from the highland districts will not affect this periodical scarcity in the local supply. From March to November the supply has hitherto exceeded the demand, and local employers of labour would secure more men by the offer of higher wages and better treatment. The hon. Member will find further information on the subject in the Papers which have already been promised.

Transvaal War Contribution.

MR. BLACK: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state how long the Government proposes to delay requiring from the Transvaal Government the fulfilment of its undertaking to pay £30,000,000 towards the expense of the war; if he will state the loss of interest arising to the Imperial Exchequer through each year's delay: and whether the Imperial Exchequer will receive from the Transvaal Government any compensation for this loss of interest.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): Payment of the first instalment has been postponed for more favourable conditions both in the money market and in the financial position of the Transvaal. The Transvaal Government did not undertake to effect repayment at any particular date, and so no question of compensation for loss owing to postponement can arise.

Mr. LOUGH: Is the agreement for underwriting this loan binding?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, Sir, it is binding.

Mr. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): Is it only binding to the extent of £10,000,000?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN? It is binding for as much as is underwritten. That agreement is not affected at all.

German Coal Exports to France.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state the quantity of coal exported from Germany to France in the years 1901, 1902, and 1903.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): The quantity of coal of domestic production exported from Germany to France in 1901 was 784,000 tons; in 1902, 965,000 tons; and in 1903, 1,056,000. This last figure is provisional and may be subject to revision.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES: Do these statistics include coke and patent fuel?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I will inquire.

Official Memorandum on "Dumping."

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade why was the official Memorandum showing by statements and facts the absence of any ground for alarm at the system of trade known as dumping, which was attached to the Board of Trade fiscal Blue-book, not included in the copies of that Blue-book, laid upon the Table of this House; and will he now lay a copy of that Memorandum upon the Table.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The Memorandum to which I suppose the hon. Member refers is quite incorrectly described in the Question, and was not attached to or intended to form part of any published Blue-book. It was a confidential Paper prepared in my Department, and circulated by me for the information of my colleagues in the Cabinet. I am not prepared to lay it on the Table. Perhaps my answer to this Question may be taken to include Question 62 put to the First Lord of the Treasury by the hon. Member for Halifax.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Lord Balfour in another place stated that this Memorandum was attached to the Fiscal Blue-book?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: If that is the case he is in error.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman present the Memorandum to the quasi-Royal Tariff Commission?

[No answer was returned.]

Appended is the second Question referred to in the Answer of the right hon. Gentleman: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will lay on the Table the Memorandum which was prepared by the Board of Trade to accompany the Fiscal Blue-book.

Infantile Mortality in Big Cities.

Captain NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can furnish a Return for the last five years of the number of infants accidentally suffocated in bed, and for the proportion of such deaths in London, Liverpool, and Manchester, compared with the rest of England and Wales; and further, for the number of cases that occur in December and January compared with any other two months.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): I scarcely think that this is a matter for a Return. Perhaps it will serve the hon. and gallant Member's purpose equally well if I give him such figures as are available. I will send him the details for the towns which he mentions, and merely state now the totals for England and Wales, viz., in 1898, 1458 children were accidentally suffocated in bed; in 1899, 1621; in 1900, 1619; in 1901, 1434; and in 1902, 1490. There are no statistics available as to the number of cases occurring in each month. I understand that the matter will be dealt with in the forthcoming volume of Criminal Statistics for 1902.

Postal Employees Subsistence Allowances.

Mr. GODDARD (Ipswich: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the discontent caused by the reduction of subsistence allowances granted to postal and telegraph clerks when absent from headquarters for the purpose of instructing or taking temporary charge of sub-offices; if so, will he say what steps he proposes to take in the matter, and will he state whether in these cases the time occupied in travelling counts towards the day's attendance; and whether, in the case of duty at town sub-offices, any monetary allowance is made for either subsistence or travelling.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I am not aware of any general discontent in regard to subsistence allowances paid to officers when absent from headquarters for the purpose of instructing or taking temporary charge of sub-offices. If the hon. Member will give me particulars of the cases to which he refers I will inquire into the matter. In such cases as those mentioned the time occupied in travelling, if properly certified, is taken into consideration in fixing the subsistence allowance. In the case of duty at town sub-offices an officer is allowed any extra expense incurred for travelling. At town sub-offices in a town other than that where his headquarters are situate, an officer would receive allowance for subsistence, but he would not receive such an allowances if detached for duty at a town sub-office in his own town.

Hopton Wafers (Shropshire) Schoolmaster.

Dr. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether his attention has been drawn to the letter written to a candidate selected for appointment to the office of headmaster of the Hopton Wafers Non-Provided School, Shropshire, by the corresponding manager on 9th February; whether that letter, which asks the candidate if after appointment he will play the organ and trim the lamps, is a violation of Article 71* of the Education Code, which makes it illegal to impose any duties outside the ordinary school hours as a condition of appointment; whether he will ascertain whether the local education authority has sanctioned the appointment in question; and, if so, whether he will call the attention of the authority to the fact that, if Article 71* be violated, the Board of Education will not recognise any teacher in schools where the conditions of that of Article have been evaded.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): I have seen the contents of the letter to which the hon. Member refers. It is a letter of inquiry addressed by one of six managers to a candidate for a teacher's place as to whether he can play the organ, and contains some information as to work done by the retiring teacher outside the duties of his post. There is nothing in the letter to suggest that the undertaking of this work was a condition of appointment—indeed, the exact contrary is stated—or that the manager who wrote the letter addressed this inquiry on behalf of his five colleagues. I am informed that the local education authority will shortly consider the matter. In the absence of further information, and until the local education authority have considered the matter, it would not be desirable for me to give a definite opinion as to whether Article 71 has been violated.

Dr. MACNAMARA: Does the hon. Gentleman think that for a corresponding manager to write such a letter is a proper proceeding?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, Order! That is a matter of opinion.

Buildings in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens.

Mr. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, if he can state how many houses and other buildings there are in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens; whether all of them are required at the present time, and whether he will take steps to secure the removal of all or some of them; what is the area occupied by the new police barracks in Hyde Park, and for how many men is accommodation there provided.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): The buildings are Kensington Palace, the Ranger's house, sixteen lodges, the block of administrative offices, the powder magazine, guard-room, and lodge, one police station, one pumping engine-station, one refreshment pavilion, the Royal Humane Society's receiving-house, and sundry plant-houses, boat-houses, kiosks, stands, shelters, and public conveniences. All of these are required. The police-barracks occupy an area of 22,000 square feet, and accommodation is provided in them for thirty-seven police officers and prisoners.

Hyde Park Enclosure.

Mr. COGHILL: I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether, before any further laying-out takes place of the new enclosure in Hyde Park on the north side of the Serpentine, an opportunity will be given to the House to express its opinion on the proposed change.

Lord BALCARRES: The outlay having been sanctioned by Parliament last year, there is no proposal before the First Commissioner to make further additions to the ground enclosing the frame houses.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

Sir FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether assent has been given to the scheme for devoting the southern front of the new Victoria and Albert Museum to the purpose of exhibition as originally proposed.

Lord BALCARRES: The reply is in the affirmative.

Caithness Crofters' Distress.

Mr. HARMSWORTH (Caithness-shire): beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware that in consequence of the nature of the harvest last yearin Caithness the crofters in the congested districts are without seed corn and cannot lay down crops this year unless seed be provided; and whether, in these circumstances, he will cause inquiry to be made and seed corn provided by the Congested Districts Board.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton): I am aware that the harvest last year was far from good. The Congested Districts Board have offered to supply seed corn, carriage paid, in the congested districts of Caithness at a charge greatly below cost prices. To supply seed on other terms would be to infringe the general policy of the Congested Districts Board, which has been adopted after most careful consideration.

Irish Magistracy.

Mr. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether, in view of the fact that magistrates appointed to the Commission of the Peace in Ireland since 1892 are confined, by the terms of their commissions, to certain Petty Sessions Courts, outside of which they cannot adjudicate, he will say whether such magistrates, by direct application to the Lord Chancellor, can have their areas of adjudication extended.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): The statement contained in the Question is not quite accurate. The Lord Chancellor, in order to make arrangements for the proper manning of the Petty Sessions Bench, and the due discharge of business, requires a justice, when appointed, to confine his attendance to certain districts then arranged between them. Of course the Lord Chancellor will be ready to consider any application of a justice to have the arrangement altered.

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in several parts of Ireland Petty Session Courts have to be adjourned for want of sufficient magistrates, they only being allowed to sit in a limited area?

Mr. ATKINSON: I know adjournments do take place, but not for that reason.

Mr. FLAVIN: I say so from personal experience.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that resident magistrates have a roving commission all over Ireland?

[No answer was returned.]

Cloonkeen Parish Committee.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.); I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that the Cloonkeen Parish Committee of the Congested Districts Board hold their meetings on a Sunday, and at a time when Protestant clergymen who are members of the Committee are unable to attend; and will he give instructions for these meetings to be held at a time when persons are not engaged in religious worship?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover); The time of holding these meetings is left to the discretion of the Committee, I am not aware that inconvenience, as alleged, is caused to members of the Committee, but I will cause my hon. friend's suggestion to be brought under the notice of the Committee.

Adair Estate, Queen's County.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether an application has been received by the Estates Commissioners on behalf of the evicted tenants upon the Adair (Mountmellick) Estate, Queen's County; and, if so, whether, in view of the fact that this estate has been sold to the tenants under the Ashbourne Act, he will state what steps it is proposed to take with reference to the evicted tenants upon the property who have not been restored to their holdings or otherwise provided for.

MR. WYNDHAM: Three such applications have been received. Should the Commissioners have an opportunity of acquiring untenanted land in the neighbourhood, the claims of the applicants will be considered.

In reply to a further Question, Mr. WYNDHAM said he did not pretend to have personal knowledge of all these estates, but he had every confidence in the Estates Commissioners.

MR. DELANY: Well, the statement I have made is true.

Granard Estate, County Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland to state why it is that the tenant purchasers on the Granard Estate living at Soran, county Longford, have been deprived of their turbary, although a large quantity of bog is available in their vicinity; and whether he will direct the Land Commission to take steps under Section 21 of the Irish Land Act, 1903, with a view to providing these tenants with turbary as before.

MR. WYNDHAM: The sales to tenants in this district were closed seven years ago. They were not deprived of any rights of turbary enjoyed by them before purchase.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: Has the right hon. Gentleman seen the judgment of the Land Commissioner in which he expressly declined to give these tenants their turbary rights.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have not seen the judgment but I am informed that after the sale they had every right they enjoyed before.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I will forward the judgment to the right hon. Gentleman, and perhaps he will bring it to the notice of the Estates Commissioners.

Jessop's Estate, County Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in negotiations for the sale of the estate of J. H. Jessop, in county Longford, the applications of two evicted tenants, Peter Farrell, of Cloghan, and James Brett of Castlerea Mountain, were refused by the landlord's representative; and, if so whether he will direct the attention of the Estates Commissioners to the case of these men with a view to arranging a sale to them.

MR. WYNDHAM: No application has been received by the Commissioners from either of these evicted tenants. If made, it will be considered.

Cusack Estate, County Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he will grant a Return showing the names of the purchasers under the Land Act, 1903, of 860 acres of the Cusack Estate, and how many of these purchasers are themselves evicted tenants or the sons of evicted tenants on this property; and whether, seeing the difficulty of procuring untenanted lands in county Longford for the settlement of evicted tenants in that county, he will represent to the Estates Commissioners the inadvisability of accepting the offers of graziers or large farmers for any portion of this estate.

MR. WYNDHAM: This estate, I have already informed the hon. Member, is administered in the Land Judge's Court. The solicitors having carriage of the proceedings propose to apply to the Land Judge for an Order authorising the Estates Commissioners to issue a request under Section 7 of the Act of last year with a view to their making an offer for the purchase of the property. The matter has not, therefore, yet been brought before the Commissioners.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: This request will shut out the evicted tenants. Will the right hon. Gentleman take action accordingly?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Edgeworthstown Loan Fund Society.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can hold out to the debenture holders in the Edgeworthstown Loan Fund Society any hope of having the available assets of the society, which were collected by Mr. James Stephens, J.P., the receiver, distributed amongst them by way of compensation for their losses.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Loan Fund Board hopes to be able to authorise payment of a dividend to the debenture holders of this society in the course of the present month.

Irish National Holidays for Government Officials.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for the St. Patrick Division of Dublin, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that in Government works in Dublin, particularly the Board of Works, bank holidays such as St. Patrick's Day are observed only by the civil servants, and that tradesmen and others in the Government employment work as usual on these days; and whether this arrangement will be discontinued on next St. Patrick's Day, so that the national holiday may be observed by all Government officials and employees in Dublin.

MR. WYNDHAM: This Question, in so far as it refers to the Board of Public Works, should more properly be addressed to the Secretary to the Treasury. If, however, there is any other Department in Dublin, for which I am answerable, in which the practice mentioned is alleged to exist, perhaps the hon. Member will communicate the name of the Department to me, when I shall be happy to make inquiry in the matter.

Irish Rating.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the provision in the Local Government Act which imposes on tenants of rateable holdings of £4 valuation and under full liability for the rates has invariably resulted in the increase of their rents by this amount; and, if so, will he consider the advisability of reverting to the former system of rating.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have no information that the fact is as alleged. Section 54 of the Local Government Act, 1898, provides for the equitable adjustment of rents between landlords and tenants in consequence of the variation in the incidence of rates. In answer to the concluding inquiry, I have nothing to add to my reply to the hon. Member's similar Question of the 24th February.†

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxx., 856.

Mr. SHEEHAN: What constitutes equitable adjustment between landlord and tenant?

Mr. WYNDHAM: An adjustment which is calculated to meet the legitimate claims of the parties.

Mr. SHEEHAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Local Government Act has actually increased the rents of the weekly-tenement holders, and of the tenants under £4 valuation by the amount of the rates assessed on them?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: The hon. Member must give notice of that Question.

Annaly Estate, County Longford.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the present position of the Annaly Estate with regard to its sale; whether the nineteen tenants whose agreements to purchase were signed but not sanctioned by the Land Commission will now have these agreements sanctioned by the Estates Commissioners; and whether, in the case of five evicted tenants on the estate, proposals for sale to them will now be considered.

Mr. WYNDHAM: Negotiations with these nineteen tenants are not yet complete. The Receiver will meet them very shortly and will also endeavour to deal with the evicted tenants.

Public Works in Galway.

Mr. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware of the fact that the memorial to the Galway Council, in reference to the Marine Works Act, was only sent to that body on the 9th February, and as the reply of the council was forwarded to Dublin Castle on the 16th February, he will state when the proposed works at Cleggan, Roundstone, and Clifden will be commenced: and, if there is to be further delay in the prosecution of those works, he will state the cause of the delay.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The forms of memorial were sent to the county council early in October. They were received back from the council, perfected and sealed, on the 25th February. The Lord Lieutenant's certificates in respect of the proposed works at Roundstone, Cleggan, and Kilronan were communicated to the Treasury this morning. In the case of Clifden negotiations have not yet been concluded.

Limerick Land Appeals.

Mr. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that the head Land Commissioners, during periods varying from four years downwards, have not given their decisions in the cases sent forward on appeal from the sub-Land Commissioners Courts held in Limerick and around, he will take steps to ensure that a sitting of those head Commissioners shall take place as soon as possible.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The last sitting of the Appeal Court which heard cases from this district, was held in November, 1902. Decisions have long since been announced in all the cases heard. A further sitting will be held at as early a date as possible.

Galway Hospital.

Mr. DUFFY (Galway, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the circumstances leading to the death of a farmer named John Holland, of Park, Athenry, county Galway, on the 11th instant, from the effects of a bullet-wound received on the night of the 1st of January last, and to the fact that at the inquest held the jury condemned the governing body of the Galway Hospital and held that this young man lost his life through their action in refusing him admission to that institution; and, if so, whether, in view of the Act of Parliament passed in 1896, creating this institution a public hospital for the county of Galway, and of the liability the upkeep of the hospital imposes on the ratepayers of the county, he will cause a sworn inquiry to be held into the circumstances leading up to the death of this young man, and consider the necessity for making some compensation to his family.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The Board of Management of Galway Hospital will meet on Saturday next, I understand, to consider the circumstances of this case, and I have caused the hon. Member's Question to be referred to it for observations.

Lalor and Nolan Estate, Castlecomer.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the tenants on the Lalor and Nolan Estate, Damerstown, Castlecomer, have come to terms as to the purchase of their farms, under the Land Act, with the owners; and, if so, will he state the cause of delay in completing the negotiations.

Mr. WYNDHAM: No application has been so far made to the Estates Commissioners for the purchase of this estate.

Kavanagh Estate, Kilkenny.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware of the arrangements made on the Kavanagh Estate, in the parish of Ballyraggett, county Kilkenny, as to the sale of their farms to the tenants under the Land Act; and, if so, will he state what arrangements have been made for the re-instatement of the families evicted on that estate.

Mr. WYNDHAM: No proceedings are at present pending before the Estates Commissioners for the sale of this estate. The cases of the evicted tenants will be duly considered in the event of such proceedings.

Burke Estate, County Mayo.

Mr. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board have purchased the Burke estate, near Claremorris, county Mayo; and, if so, whether, seeing that on this estate there is a considerable quantity of grazing land suitable for distribution purposes, and that there are a number of evicted tenants on the estate, he will take immediate steps to put the provisions of the Land Act of 1903 into operation in that district by giving a preference to the evicted tenants before planting any other tenants on these lands.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The Congested Districts Board has purchased this estate, which is nearly ready for re-sale to the tenants. I am making inquiry into the hon. Member's suggestion in respect of the evicted tenants.

Irish Board of Agriculture Inspectors.

Mr. REDDY (King's County, Birr): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of inspectors employed by the Board of Agriculture and Technical Instruction in Ireland; how many of these are Irishmen, Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Germans; whether any competitive examinations took place at which Irishmen were allowed to compete for these offices; whether the appointments were the result of examination or recommendation by English and Scotch examining bodies; and whether the Department conducted any examination on its own account.

Mr. WYNDHAM: Seventy-one inspectors. None of these positions are filled by competitive examination. The qualifications are professional or scientific, and appointments are made on the principle of choosing the men best qualified by knowledge and experience, without regard to considerations of nationality. For the reasons explained in my letter of the 29th February, I am unable to give any information on the latter point.

Mr. FLAVIN: How many Irishmen have been done out of appointments?

Equivalent Grant—Wexford County Council Resolution.

Mr. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of a resolution passed by the Wexford County Council recommending that the unappropriated portion of the Equivalent Grant be applied to the heating, cleansing, and proper sanitary fitting up of primary schools in Ireland; and whether he proposes to apply this sum to this purpose as well as the increase of inadequate school staffs and encouragement of education by a system of school prizes for attendance and proficiency.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The manner in which it is proposed to allocate this money will be shown in the Development Grant Estimate shortly to be laid before Parliament.

Irish Tourist Services.

Mr. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can give the dates on which the tourists' services were established between Listowel and Tarbert by car, between Tarbert and Kilrush by steamer, and between Ennistymon and Ballyvaughan by car; and whether he will say if the service was a daily one; and, if not, what portion of the year was covered by the service between Listowel and Tarbert, Tarbert and Kilrush, and Ennistymon and Ballyvaughan.

Mr. WYNDHAM: All three services were established on the 1st June, 1897. The Listowel to Tarbert service has been worked daily, Sundays excepted. The other two services have been worked from June to September in each year (both months inclusive)—the steamer service daily, except on Sundays, and the Ennistymon to Ballyvaughan service on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Reeves Estate, Skibbereen.

Mr. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that an evicted tenant named Cornelius Sullivan, formerly living on the Reeves Estate, near Skibbereen, has failed to obtain shelter for himself and family for some months past, in consequence of the action of the police who have visited neighbours who had promised him a site for a house and induced them to break their promise to this evicted tenant; whether he will grant an inquiry into the conduct of the police in this matter and also direct the attention of the Estates Commissioners to this evicted tenant's case.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I am informed that this evicted tenant and his family are living in a labourer's cottage in the locality. The District Inspector of Constabulary assures me that the allegation in the Question affecting the police is entirely without foundation. Any application made by the evicted tenant to the Estates Commissioners will be considered.

Mr. SHEEHAN: Is it the fact that this tenant was refused the right of free sale by his landlord, who is a Dean of the Protestant Church?

Mr. WYNDHAM: I have no information as to that.

Irish National Schools—Pupil Teachers' Training.

*Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether, in view of the fact that the inspectors of Irish primary schools, while praising the enthusiasm and diligence of the teachers, have reported that the practical training of pupil teachers and monitors is unsatisfactory, he will consider how far this is due to the schools being understaffed and insufficiently equipped with teaching apparatus; and whether he will recommend that the balance of the Irish Development Grant should be devoted to the purposes of primary education in Ireland.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The Commissioners were not satisfied with the training given to pupil teachers and monitors, a result largely attributable to the defective system of training pursued by teachers in whose schools they were employed. The manner in which it is proposed to allocate the Development Grant will be shown in the Estimate shortly to be laid on the table.

In reply to a further Question, Mr. Wyndham said he could not in an Answer across the floor of the House embody the speeches he had made on the Education Estimate.

Mr. SLOAN: Is there any Committee of Inquiry sitting on this?

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give notice of that.

Local Taxation (Ireland) Account.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, what is the amount of the unappropriated balance to the credit of the Local Taxation (Ireland) Account; and how it is proposed to deal with this sum.

MR. WYNDHAM: A sum of £70,000, representing the unexpended balance of moneys paid into the account as the equivalent of local taxation licences under Section 58 (1) of the 61 and 62 Vic. cap. 37. This balance cannot, under Sub-section 5 of the same enactment, be diverted from the Local Taxation Account except in such manner as Parliament may direct.

Land Purchase—County Council Liability.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of a resolution passed by the Donegal County Council on the 19th ultimo urging that, inasmuch as the county councils may be liable to the Government for any default made by purchasers under the Land Act of 1903 in payment of annuities, the county councils should be empowered, in the absence of any inspection by the Land Commission, to intervene in all sales advertised between landlords and tenants in order to safeguard the ratepayers from being liable for the default of purchasers; and, if so, will he state what has been his reply thereto, and what steps, if any, does he propose to take by way of amendment to the Land Act of 1903 or otherwise to secure the ratepayers from liability for default in payment of such annuities.

MR. WYNDHAM: The resolution was received and acknowledged. It calls for no further action.

Land Purchase in Ulster.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on certain estates in Ulster the solicitors to the landlords are putting pressure on the tenants to come in and purchase on high prices by an assurance to the tenants, coupled with an offer of the best bogs, that the Estates Commissioners will treat as an estate any purchase of the property when an agreement is arrived at; and what steps, if any, does the Irish Government propose to take for the purpose of refuting this misrepresentation as to the intention of the Estates Commissioners.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have no information on the first part of the Question. Any such assurance, if given, would be a misrepresentation of the provisions in the Act and the practice of the Estates Commissioners.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman make inquiry?

MR. WYNDHAM: I do not think it comes within my province to do so.

Proposed Railway Station at Kilconnell.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the fact that the Midland Great Western Railway Company have purchased and fenced in a piece of land in the neighbourhood of Kilconnel, county Galway, for the purpose of building a station for the convenience of the people of that district, and that the number of stock frequently sold at the Kilconnell fairs require a special train for their removal, and at present have to be driven a distance of from five to nine miles to the nearest stations, and that the people of Kilconnell and the public boards in the district, together with the Lord Lieutenant and magistrates of the county, have frequently requested the directors to erect a station, he will bring pressure to bear on the directors of this company, on which special powers have been conferred, to comply with this request.

MR. WYNDHAM: This matter was considered by the new Department a couple of years ago. The Department was then advised that it did not come within the scope of its powers under Section 17 of the Act of 1899.

Tipperary Labourers Order Loan.

MR. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he will state the cause of the delay in forwarding to the No. 2 Tipperary District Council the first instalment of the loan under the Tipperary (No. 2) Labourers Order, 1903, Part 1, seeing that, at the January meeting in this year, the district council were asked by the Board of Works for the sum of £8 10s. to defray expenses in preparing deeds of mortgage, and forwarded this money so that the first instalment of the loan might be received in February, so as to give the plots for tillage to the labourers; but no instalment has come, nor has any labourer got his plot.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): The necessary lodgment for legal expenses was not made by the Tipperary No. 2 Rural District Council until the 11th ultimo. Treasury authority has been given for the payment of the first instalment of the loan as soon as possible.

War Office Reorganisation Committee s Report.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Report of the War Office Reorganisation Committee, published on the 29th February, has been approved by his Majesty's Government; if so, whether it is proposed to give immediate effect to the proposals contained in it; and whether the recommendations in the Report are to be considered as binding on the War Office.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): No Reports of Committees can ever be binding on the Executive Government. As regards the particular representations contained in the Report referred to, and which have been recently published, they have not yet been considered by the Army Council, which was brought into existence in accordance with the recommendations of the first Report of the Committee. In these circumstances I am not yet prepared to state the opinions of the Government on the proposals.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): On the fourth successive day I have to ask when this Report is likely to be in the hands of Members.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Since the right hon. Gentleman first put the Question to me I have looked further into the matter, and I shall be glad to give the House, if it cares to have it, a succinct account of what has happened. The Report, however, is actually in the Vote Office at the present moment, as probably a great number of Members of the House are aware.

Defence of the Thames.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the question of the better defence of the entrance to the Thames will receive the consideration of the Defence Committee.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The question of the better defence of the entrance to the Thames is part of a more general question which is receiving attention.

Prime Minister and Protection.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the public interest in the subject, he will now take some means of putting the public in possession of his pamphlet in advocacy of protection, which was placed before the Cabinet contemporaneously with his published pamphlet on "Insular Free Trade."

MR. BALFOUR: There was no pamphlet such as the hon. Member refers to, and I have never advocated protection in or out the Cabinet.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: May I, as a matter of personal explanation——

*MR. SPEAKER: It is difficult to see how a personal explanation arises on this answer.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I wished to explain that I should not have put the Question had I not been fortified by a speech of the late Secretary of State for India.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is not a personal explanation. The hon. Member should be more careful when claiming to make one.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: With all due respect, Sir, I think every Member who puts down a Question is responsible for seeing that it is well founded, and I only wished to state my authority for this Question.

The War Office Committee.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is now possible to indicate a date when a special opportunity will be afforded for discussing the recommendations of the War Office Reconstitution Committee and the changes consequent thereon.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think it is possible yet to indicate a date such as my hon. and gallant friend desires; but, of course, such an opportunity must be given. I would, however, suggest to the House that it would be more convenient that that date should be deferred until we are in a position to state whether, and how far, we desire to modify the recommendations of the Committee. I cannot give a day first to discuss the Report of the Committee and afterwards to discuss the policy of the Government with regard to that Report. I, therefore, think it would be better to defer the matter until the Government are in a position to state what is their exact policy as regards War Office reconstruction, in addition to what they have already done and propose to do.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Does the right hon. Gentleman's answer apply to those points in the Report which are affected by the Estimates of the present year.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: May I ask whether it is not the fact that there is a third and even more startling part of the Report to appear, and whether my right hon. friend will consider the advisability of postponing the discussion until after that appears?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: May I ask whether, if the Government have definitely adopted the first part of the Report, the Army Estimates ought not to be remodelled in order to exhibit the effect of the change of policy upon the Estimates, so that some notion may be given to the House of what the cost of the change may be?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I do not exactly follow the right hon. Gentleman's Question; but if he refers to the cost necessitated by the changes in the staff at the War Office, I have already given him my undertaking that if I find that there will be any additional cost, which I do not anticipate, it shall be brought before the House. If the right hon. Gentleman refers to any organic changes in the distribution of the Army on a large scale, I do not think it is possible to bring any alteration that may be due to them into the Army Estimates for the coming year. I do not think that any alteration of expenditure can possibly be decided upon in the present year.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to ask the House of Commons to vote the salaries for offices which have been abolished?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Baronet asked me whether the first part of the Report would come up for discussion on the Army Estimates. I would remind him that the whole of the first part of the Report has not been adopted by His Majesty's Government, though certain recommendations have been accepted; but, personally, I think if the House would abstain from leading the debate on the Army Estimates into a channel which deals with these changes it would be an advantage. I think it would be more convenient if we could discuss the changes as a whole when the Government are in a position to state what they are. That, of course, is only advice which I am not able to enforce. My hon. friend behind me asks me whether the general discussion which I have foreshadowed could be postponed until the third and, I believe, the final instalment of the Report of the Committee is before us. I have not seen the remaining instalment, and I have no idea of its contents; but I should think it would be better that we should discuss the Report as a whole and the action of the Government as a whole. The House will then be in a position to criticise the Report of the Committee, and if the action of the Government differs from the Report of the Committee to criticise the Government for their departure from the Report.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Shall we not have to discuss reductions in cost and in the number of men? Also the decision of the Government on the linked battalion and Army Corps systems?

MR. WHITLEY: Are we to be asked to vote the money first and discuss the abolition of the offices afterwards?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: There is no proposal in the Army Estimates for an alteration of the army corps system or of the linked battalion system. Neither of these suggestions has been adopted by the Government as specific acts of policy. The Estimates will be framed on the basis of continuing the present system until it is decided to alter it. No alteration in the existing system will be made until the Government as a whole has accepted the Report and the House has sanctioned any action of the Government that may be taken in consequence.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is somewhat difficult to understand the precise degree of approval or consent which the Government have given to these proposed changes. There was a curious little note before what was published in *The Times* on Monday, which certainly did not appear in all the other papers—perhaps in no other paper—stating that the King had given his leave for the publication of the Report. Was that intended to convey any additional authority to the recommendations of the Report, either on the part of the Government or of His Majesty himself?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware of the note to which the right hon. Gentleman refers, and I do not think His Majesty's name ought to be dragged into this discussion.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I did not drag His Majesty's name in. The person who dragged it in was the member of the Government or some other official authority, and who sent the note to *The Times*.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I meant no reflection on the right hon. Gentleman. It was the last thing I intended. All I meant to say was that the Government, and the Government alone, in fact, in this case the Prime Minister alone, is responsible for the permission to publish the Report on Monday. I was asked whether I had any objection, and I said I had no objection, and it was done, and done under circumstances which, I am sorry to say, have prevented Members of the House from being in personal possession of the Report as soon as they ought to have been. For the permission to publish I am wholly responsible. That publication does not carry with it any indication that the Government approve or intend to act on the Report. That we shall probably adopt a great many of the recommendations I do not personally deny; but there is absolutely no suggestion that we are bound to accept the Report. It ought to be in the hands of the public, and it is in the hands of the public. [MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: But not in the hands of the House.] It is in the hands of the House and of the hon. Gentleman, if he desires it, through the newspapers. I am sorry it was not in his hand as a Member of Parliament, that he did not have it on Monday morning with his official Papers. I do not know that I can say any more than that by the way of explanation or apology for what has occurred. I hope our attitude towards the second Report of the Committee has been made perfectly clear by what I have said in answer to the right hon. Gentleman and to my gallant friend behind me.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL asked by whom the communication was made to which the right hon. Gentleman's answer was that he had no objection.

*MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the House that it is now past Three o'clock, and the Standing Order does not allow a fresh series of Questions to be entered upon.

Alteration of Questions.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth) as a matter of the personal explanation complained that a Question of his, which he handed in at the Table on the previous day, had been rendered absolutely incoherent by alteration, and asked whether hon. Members should not have the opportunity of seeing the revised edition of their Questions before they were printed on the Paper.

*MR. SPEAKER said that a few days before he had stated the general principle that it was the duty of the Clerk at the Table to give notice of alterations not merely verbal, but sometimes, with perhaps a hundred Questions coming in in a day, mistakes might occur. He would make further inquiry into this matter, but he could assure the hon. Member that mistakes of the kind he complained of, though occasionally inevitable, were in no way intentional.

NEW BILLS.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To authorise the transfer to the Secretary for Scotland of certain powers and duties under the Acts relating to Reformatory and Industrial Schools," presented by Mr. Cochrane; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed, [Bill 107.]

OLD AGE PENSIONS (No. 3) BILL.

"To establish a system of Old Age Pensions," presented by Sir James Rankin; supported by Mr. Laurence Hardy, Mr. Hozier, Sir Mark Stewart, Mr. Lambert, and Mr. Bousfield; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 108.]

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend the provisions of The Congested Districts (Scotland) Act, 1897, as to the style and title of the Commissioners, the execution of deeds by them, and the application of the Fund constituted by the said Act," presented by Mr. A. Graham Murray; supported by the Lord Advocate; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 109.]

FOREIGN TRAWLERS REGULATION BILL.

"To provide for the better prevention of fishing by Foreign Trawl Vessels within areas closed to British Trawl Vessels," presented by Mr. Black; supported by Mr. Weir, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Harmsworth, Mr. John Wilson (Falkirk), Mr. Ainsworth, and Captain Ellice; to be read a second time upon Friday, 17th June, and to be printed. [Bill 110.]

TRAWLERS' CERTIFICATES SUSPENSION BILL.

"To enable courts to suspend the Certificates of Trawlers convicted of illegal trawling," presented by Mr. Harmsworth; supported by Mr. Weir, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. John Wilson (Falkirk), Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Black, and Mr. Cathcart Wason. To be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 111.]

SUPPLY [1ST ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,634,200, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other Charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

*THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARTHUR LEE, Hampshire, Fareham) understood it would be a convenience to the Committee if he made a brief explanatory statement in reference to this Vote and with regard to naval works generally. It had been the recent practice, in years when Naval Works Bills were not introduced, to allow on Vote 10 a discussion of the large Loan works sanctioned by Bills of previous years. The apparent increase in the Vote was £132,000, but there was really no effective increase as regards new works, the difference of £132,000 being entirely attributable to annuities which had become due for the repayment of loans advanced under previous Naval Works Bills. The effective works portion of the Vote remained the same as last year, viz., £1,000,000. Logically speaking, there should be an increase in the effective portion of the Vote, because it was really the handmaid of the other Naval Votes, providing or maintaining works made necessary by the policy expressed in those Votes. A very small portion, indeed—only £90,600—of the Vote this year represented works for which Parliamentary sanction was now asked for the first time. The great bulk was for fixed charges and continuation services which were rapidly and inevitably growing. Last year they absorbed £820,000, and this year £900,000, out of the £1,000,000 available, and it was almost inevitable that next year they would absorb the whole of the £1,000,000, at present allotted to the effective portion of the Vote, so that there would be no balance remaining for the commencement of any new works which might be considered necessary. It would be obvious to the Committee that these maintenance charges and continuation services and also the total of the Vote must necessarily steadily increase, because every year the amount to be repaid under previous Naval Works Loans Acts steadily increased. But the Committee would probably be chiefly interested in the new items. The sum to be spent under this head, as he had already said, was only £90 600, and, speaking generally, in the allocation of the money the educational services of the Fleet had been first considered. The policy of the Admiralty was to push on the new items as rapidly as possible, and, where it could be done, to finish all comparatively small items within the current year. That was an economical system based on the principle of paying as they went, and it tended to reduce the amount for continuation services in succeeding years. Within the last few days the Admiralty had been charged on many occasions with extravagance, but he could claim that there was no Vote in regard to which more rigid economy was exercised than the Vote now under discussion. The Committee would perhaps be surprised at the small proportion which the number of services for which Parliamentary sanction was now asked bore to the number of services put forward by the responsible naval authorities in different parts of the world. The number of demands put forward for the present Estimates were 593, of which 312 were backed by the responsible heads of Departments as being necessary. The number now submitted to the House was only 163, of which only twenty-four were actually works of magnitude involving an expenditure of more than £2,000. He would not trouble the Committee by detailing the new works, for they were set out in the Estimates, and he would only say that he was anxious to give the fullest possible information about any of those works, whether on Vote 10 or being constructed under the Loans Act for previous years.

With regard to the Loan works under construction, hon. Gentlemen had asked what was the financial position of the Loan works at the present time. He would summarise his answer. The actual expenditure that had already been paid out on these works to the beginning of this year was £16,300,000. In addition to that they had actually incurred liabilities in the way of contracts to the extent of some £7,000,000 more. That left about £8,250,000, already sanctioned under previous Works Act, sstill intact. The expenditure for 1903–4 on these Naval Works was £3,500,000, and it was estimated that it would be slightly more during 1904–5.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): Do I understand that £7,000,000 will complete the works now in hand?

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE said that amount would complete the sum of money already sanctioned by Parliament under previous Works Bills. In the Bill of last year there were three items put down as token sums because it was not possible to estimate the expenditure on those works. There might have to be a Works Bill next year to provide the money for those works.

Mr. O'MARA asked if the hon. Member had any idea what the liabilities of the country were in regard to works already undertaken?

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said it was impossible to give an estimate of the cost of works of magnitude, the extent of which had not yet been decided.

MR. O'MARA asked if the hon. Member could give him an approximate estimate.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE replied that that was not possible. This great expenditure had become necessary, not merely on account of the increase in the Fleet, but on account of the starving of Vote 10 in previous years. As regarded the works under construction, he would merely say that generally they were progressing very favourably, with the exception of the dockyard extensions at Malta and Bermuda. In his opinion there was no expenditure which was really more effective and more vital to the efficiency of the Fleet than this expenditure. Works of this kind did not become obsolete very quickly, and were not so liable to destruction in time of war, at least not in the same sense as the ships which were so cheerfully voted for the Navy. Under this Vote the country had permanent value for the money, which was not possible in the building of ships. He would cite as an example the new battleships of the "King Edward VII." type, which in twenty years would probably be sold as scrap-iron, whereas, works of this kind in twenty years time would be in the heyday of their youth, and for many years after that time would remain of permanent value to the country. The lessons of the present war in the Far East showed that the unfortunate position in which the Russian fleet found itself at the present time was due not so much to any lack of fighting power, as to the lack of adequate facilities for repairing and for the sheltering of the fleet from torpedo attacks. That, he thought, was a justification for this vast expenditure, and one which he hoped would commend itself to the Committee. In conclusion he thought he might claim that although the secret of their sea-power primarily depended upon our fighting Fleet, it also depended in no small degree upon the bricks and mortar for which he was now asking the Committee to vote these vast sums.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said he was sure the Committee was well pleased with the first performance of the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member, however, had not mentioned the administrative reason, which was that it was necessary to have Treasury authority for new works of magnitude, and it had always been the practice to take Vote 10 early in the year. The hon. Gentleman spoke of the progress under the Naval Works Acts, and he seemed to indicate that this would be the only opportunity they should have of considering it. The question, however, might have to be raised at another time, but he wished to recall the fact that in years in which there was no Naval Works Act they had always held themselves entitled, on the Admiralty Vote and on the Vote for the salary of the First Lord or the Secretary to the Admiralty, to raise any question in regard to naval works. Consequently he preferred to postpone his criticisms to that period. By that time they would have the annual report of progress made under those Acts, which was published some time in July, and then they might proceed to deal with the various items in the Naval Works Acts. He was glad to see the hon. Member for Exeter in his place, because he had been able to give them some very valuable financial criticism on the Navy Estimates in general. The Civil Lord had said that Vote 10 was the handmaid of the other Votes, and he had compared and justified the large amount by the fact that it was starved in other years. To a certain extent that was true. The Works Vote in former days was not the handmaid, but it was the Cinderella of the Navy Vote, and it was snubbed and robbed. That was in the days before Civil Lords were efficient Ministers. It was no doubt starved and plundered, and in the days before the Naval Works Acts it had reached dangerously small figures. What he wished to point out to the hon. Member for Exeter was that the increase in the general Estimates about which they had raised such a clamour, was nothing compared to the increase in this special Vote. He admitted that the figures were too low before the Naval Works Acts were passed, and it was because they were too low that those Acts were introduced. There was one fundamental fact which would illustrate what he meant. For years before 1895, the time of the first Naval Works Act, he thought they would find that Vote 10, for works, amounted to about £400,000 or £500,000. What was the expenditure on naval works this year? He deducted from the Estimate they were now discussing the whole amount of the annuities, and, deducting them, the net Vote was £1,000,000. What would be the net expenditure under the remaining portions of the Naval Works Acts. Nominally, it would not be more than £3,500,000. The hon. Gentleman spoke of the balance of the £8,500,000 sanctioned last year. They were spending £3,500,000 this year, and there was a balance of £5,000,000 in the hands of the Admiralty to be spent on the previous Acts. If they put those sums together they would see that upon bricks and mortar the Admiralty was empowered to spend in the coming financial year the sum of £6,000,000 sterling. That was a great increase compared with the increase in new construction. When the total Navy Estimates amounted to about £14,000,000, we spent only about one twenty-eighth of the whole on works; now, when the total was £42,000,000, we spent nearly a third on works. These were facts well worthy of consideration. The mere amount of the expenditure alone was so startling that it deserved the serious attention of the Committee.

Probably the Civil Lord did not know that a good deal of the expenditure under the Acts of previous years never received the sanction of the House at all, because it was one of the achievements of the representatives of the Admiralty in former days, that, after allowing discussion on works already sanctioned, they closured the House when considering new works. The hon. Gentleman had justified, in general terms, the policy of these Acts. He was not disposed to attack the policy, but he would point out that it had received an enormous development since it passed away from their hands; and that they were no longer responsible for what was now done under Naval Works Acts. He thought the hon. Gentleman drew the correct inference from the events going on in another part of the world. What they were reading about proved the wisdom of the policy of building enclosed harbours fortified against torpedo attack. But that justified his argument that, when considering this two-Power standard, we were not to count battleships or men or money alone. These very naval works constituted part of our superiority, and ought to enter into any comparison of our naval strength and that of other countries. In view, therefore, of their works policy, what was the Government's standard? How would they estimate our relative superiority over any other country or over all others put together, considering that docks, defended ports, and coaling stations, were all items into which this expenditure entered? Such a comparison between ourselves and other Powers would be interesting. These great docks, harbours, and coaling stations were just as necessary to battleships as any part of their equipment. In any comparison between our Navy and other Navies that must be counted. He was sorry he had not all the materials wherewith to make a comparison, but he would be very much astonished if it did not turn out that in this respect the British Navy was beyond all approach from any other Power. They had had a definite pledge from the Government that the items in the Bill formerly before the House, and now an Act, were final. It now seemed that they were not final, but he hoped the Government would be able to renew that pledge before the debate closed. They could not discuss the new works until they had a full estimate of the expenditure under the new Works Act, and he therefore hoped that hon. Members would not overdo the discussion on the subject at this stage. What they desired to do was to raise a general discussion on the whole expenditure. It would be noted that a very large amount of the expenditure under Vote 10 was to be administered abroad. These docks, ports, and coaling stations were necessarily scattered all over the world. He should like to know what portion of the expenditure belonged to Great Britain and what belonged to other parts of the Empire. Hon. Gentleman from Ireland had called attention to the smallness of the colonial contribution. He thought it was not too much to expect that where land was wanted in a self-governing colony for the purposes of the Navy or any other service, a free grant should be made by the colony to the British Exchequer. How much did the Colonies contribute to the Navy, and how much did this country spend in the Colonies? He should like all those critics who had been shocked by the rise in the Navy Estimates to devote some of their criticisms to this abnormal rise for naval works.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) said it was time that the House and the country should have from the Government an authoritative statement and accurate account of this colonial naval expenditure; and he asked his hon. friend to give his attention to this matter, as on broad grounds it was desirable to have the information. They had all listened to the hon. Gentleman's statement with great pleasure. He was brief, to the point, and lucid. The hon. Gentleman had pointed to events in the Far East, and the argument he intended the Committee to understand was, how much better off the Russian Fleet would have been at this moment if they had had more docks at Port Arthur. That was only true to a very limited extent; because while it was most desirable that at these distant stations we should have docks, on the other hand there was a danger of our being too profuse in the expenditure of our money on docks. How many docks did the hon. Gentleman think would have altered the position at Port Arthur? There were nine ships. If one ship occupied a dock the other eight must wait. You could not provide a dock at every station for every ship you had got there. He mentioned that in view of another Naval Works Bill next year; and he hoped the Admiralty would be very cautious in proposing any further extensions of th number of existing docks—he did not say in increasing the dimensions of the existing docks. His own opinion was that if at Port Arthur the Russians had had a couple of reserve ships their position would have been a great deal better than if they had had docks. He would like to ask if the hon. Gentleman was in possession of any information of considerable damage having been done by a gale to the preparations of the breakwater at Malta? If his information was correct, the damage caused by the gale would materially delay the construction of the work. Under Sub-head NN. there was a charge of £3,700 for pay of seamen and Marines employed on works abroad. He would like some details as to why there was this charge, and why it was only made for one particular station—Bermuda. What advantage was there in employing seamen and Marines on works on shore at that place? When all the men were receiving a good deal of skilled training in mechanics, he looked forward to a policy which would take the older seamen and Marines out of active service if they could be usefully employed at the bases on different foreign stations where we had means of repairing. He thought this sum of £3,700 for extra pay was one rather of tradition. What he wanted to know was whether, compared with other stations, where only civil workmen were employed it was more economic to employ seamen and Marines at this station. If it was not, why was the system retained at Bermuda; and if it was, why was the system not applied elsewhere?

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said he wished to make a few observations of a general character on this Vote, particularly on the expenditure under the Naval Works Acts. He did not entirely agree with the hon. Member for Dundee, who was rather in favour of postponing the discussion on the progress of the naval works, to give time to the Secretary to the Admiralty to submit more information to the Committee. He was disposed to think that, considering the possible changes and chances of Parliament were never greater than at present, they should avail themselves of the opportunity now offered to discuss this important subject. On the general question of expenditure upon naval works, as it appeared before the Committee in the present year, he should like to emphasise what had been said—and not strongly enough—by his hon. friend regarding the enormous expenditure this country was making in this one particular department. The Secretary to the Admiralty, in answer to the hon. Member for Exeter, acknowledged that the estimated amount to be spent in the ensuing year on naval works was £5,000,000. There was to be added to that the effective part of this Vote, £1,000,000, or £6,000,000 in all. So far as relative proportions were concerned, that was the greatest of all the increases in the Estimates on naval expenditure. What he would like to call the attention of the Committee to was, that as soon as we introduced a system of expenditure out of loan money for the purpose of naval works, Vote 10, instead of decreasing, went up by leaps and bounds; so that the greater the facility given to the Government for spending money out of borrowed capital, the greater was the increase in the amount of the annual Estimates. Between 1890–1 and 1894–5 the average amount of Vote 10 for naval works was between £400,000 and £450,000. When the Naval Works Bill was first introduced up went the expenditure to £650,000; in 1899 it was £800,000, in the following year £850,000, and now it had reached £1,000,000, while in future years it would considerably exceed £1,000,000, as was admitted by the hon. Gentleman himself.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that what he had stated was that the Vote would have to be increased because there was no money available for new works.

MR. BUCHANAN said that the hon. Gentleman admitted that there would be no margin for new works, and therefore he was justified in concluding that there would be, in all probability, an increased Vote next year. His hon. friend the Member for Dundee referred to this point when he was comparing our expenditure with that of other countries. He was under the mark when he said that our naval works expenditure was more than equal to that of two or three other Powers. It was more than that of all the other naval Powers in the world. In Lord Brassey's Navy Annual it was stated that before the Naval Works Act was passed we spent £3,500,000. Russia spent nearly £1,000,000; France and Germany combined, between £700,000 and £800,000; so that we spent nearly double the amount spent by the whole of these great Powers. Of course, he recognised that the necessities of our widely extended Empire were enormously greater in this respect than the exigencies of any other Power. Still there could be no doubt that this was one of the most rapidly increasing Votes in the whole purview of the Committee's survey of naval affairs. This method caused confusion in the accounts, and also difficulty in following the course of the policy of the Government with regard to naval works. Since the practice of annual or semi-annual Bills was introduced they were constantly finding that similar works were at one time placed on the Naval Works Acts and at another time on the Votes; and it was almost impossible to ascertain what the gross expenditure was. In the Naval Works Bill of last year there was an item of over £1,250,000 for dredging purposes. In the Vote before the Committee there was a considerable number of items for the same purpose. It was possible that money for dredging was now being asked for in connection with the identical ports for which money had been already voted in the Naval Works Act.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge) said, as he told the hon. Gentleman last year, the maintenance of dredging was paid for out of the Votes, but new dredging was paid for by loan. New dredging was in connection with schemes which did not previously exist.

MR. BUCHANAN said how could a distinction be drawn between Loan money spent in Wei-hai-Wei, and the money out of the Votes that was to be spent on it? Last year, on the Naval Works Bill, he drew attention to the fact that no such distinction was drawn or could be drawn. The answer of the hon. Gentleman then was that the general lines on which the Admiralty proceeded was that large works which might be looked upon as of a permanent character were paid for by loan and that temporary works were paid for out of the Estimates. Then, again, borrowed money was expended for the provision of coaling facilities; but money was also being asked for that purpose on the Votes, and there was nothing on the face of the Estimates to show any distinction between the two. Some distinction ought to be shown; and he was led to make that observation because a change had been introduced into the Naval Works Bills of the last two years. In the Act for which his hon. friend the Member for Dundee was responsible there was a schedule stating the specific works which were to be constructed and their estimated cost. In recent Bills, however, a large sum was asked for for general purposes such as dredging and the provision of coaling facilities, and items were inserted for which no estimate was given. He thought that the Admiralty might give information to the Committee with reference to the three large items on last year's Bill. Last year the Admiralty promised to state the total sum that would be spent on coaling stations. The Committee should also be told what was the estimated cost of the new dockyard on the Forth and what was the progress of the surveys there. As regarded the confusion caused by charging certain sums on the Estimates and other sums on the Naval Works Act, he would like to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty a question with regard to Coastguard stations and the barracks for the Royal Naval Reserve. In the Naval Estimates last year there were twenty-one items, for nine of which money was voted. Nearly all of the others had disappeared; and so far as he could make out they could not have been completed unless the Admiralty had completed them with savings from other sub-heads. He should like to know what became of the items. He had a suspicion that they had been swept off the Estimates and put into the naval works expenditure because, in the Act of last year, the Admiralty obtained unlimited credit for the purposes of Coastguard stations and barracks for the Royal Naval Reserve. The same criticism applied to the next item, in which there was a very large decrease as compared with previous years. Such trifling works should be paid for out of the Estimates year by year, and the expenditure on them should not be spread over a period of thirty years. That was an extravagant form of finance and ought not to commend itself to the House. The Civil Lord of the Admiralty said that they were exercising rigid economy in regard to this Vote. He himself was very glad to hear it, because this was a branch of the service in regard to which economy had not been practised in recent years. The hon. Gentleman said that there had been 593 applications for extra expenditure, 312 of which were backed up by the responsible naval authorities, but only 163 of which were approved. Were the Committee to understand that this economy was due to the Admiralty or to the Treasury. Was it the Treasury that had put the curb on extra naval expenditure? If so, they ought to be thankful to that Department. It would be a great danger to the taxpayers of this country if the control of the purse were handed over to the great spending Departments. Essentially what was wanted for the protection of the taxpayer, and with a view to economy, was some controlling Department which would hold a tight hand over the demands of the naval and military authorities.

*SIR EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter) said he was in general agreement with what had been said by the hon. Member for Dundee and also by the hon. Member who had just spoken. The Vote had been called a "handmaid" Vote and a "Cinderella" Vote; but he was inclined to call it a sham Vote. As a matter of fact, it did not represent in the least the total expenditure of the year. The Committee were apparently voting £1,136,000, but the real amount that would be spent would be something like £6,000,000. His criticism applied both to the fact and to the form. It appeared to him that the total expenditure which it was proposed to incur during the year ought to be clearly shown on the Estimates. That was an alteration which could be easily accepted by the hon. Gentlemen representing the Admiralty. The Committee ought to have a full statement of the cost of all the works to be undertaken. Of late, whilst important reforms had been carried through, and whilst he was the first to recognise the practical vigour of the Admiralty, he had noticed there was a very prevalent idea in the service that it was much easier to get money now than formerly. Consequently many demands of not very urgent importance, were now put forward. If that idea could be dispelled he believed great economies could be effected. His objections to the present form of the Estimates, and particularly with regard to the larger portion of the money to be expended, were of a varied character. The system had one very considerable financial defect, inasmuch as it entirely deceived the House and the country. Any one looking at the Estimates would imagine that all that was to be expended was £1,600,000, whereas in reality the amount to be expended was £6,000,000. Another effect was the hypothecation of future Naval Estimates to meet present needs. He was convinced that the expenditure in the future would not be reduced on account of present borrowing, and the fact that a large sum was owing would be made an argument and used as a lever to increase still further the Estimates of the future. He further complained of the plan of drawing from the control of the House large amounts of important expenditure. It was an admitted principle of sound finance that every service must be reviewed at one time, and it was a most absurd practice to deal now with one item of £1,600,000 and with another item of precisely similar character at another time. Both these proposals ought to be reviewed at the same time, and accepted or refused together. The truth was that the Naval Works Bill had become a grave financial scandal, and a grave danger. This Committee could not put its foot down too soon on this particular point, and say that the whole financial expenditure of the year must be discussed in one budget. At the present moment the budget represented only a proportion of the expenditure, and he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer when making his financial statement would consider the advisability of including the expenditure under the Works Bills, so that the House might know where it was. The Admiralty had taken a very wise step in that direction, inasmuch as they had set forth in a recent Return the total expenditure of the year under both the Estimates and the Naval Works Bill. That was a practice he desired to see imitated by the Military and all other Departments which obtained funds under similar powers. Another point which was really only the corollary of what he had said was that in his judgment Article 2, "Annuities and payment of advances under the Naval Works Acts," would under a sound system of finance not be on the Admiralty Vote at all. It was a very dangerous plan to have a National Debt, and outside the Debt to have individual Departments each having a little private debt of its own. Such a plan must lead to exaggerated expenditure, exaggerated borrowing, and concealed our latent debt. He criticised the present Vote on the ground that it did not put the true state of affairs before the Committee, and that the plan adopted, if persisted in, would seriously hamper and cripple the Navy in future years.

MR. O'MARA said he ha always thought it much easier to obtain information from the Admiralty than the War Office, and, with regard to the Vote they were now discussing, he tendered his thanks to the Civil Lord for the publication of the Estimates. He complained that these Works Bills practically gave a blank cheque to the Government, for the reason that the items contained in them could not always be adequately discussed owing to time not always being given by the Government. He further complained that no guarantee had been given that the sums now asked for would be the final amounts required. The Committee laboured under the difficulty that details were not given and they were unable to discuss them. As regarded repayments, he noticed that they were spread over a long period of years. Doubtless many of the works would be in good condition in twenty years' time, but, on the other hand, many would be quite out of date. The burden of such works as dredging ought surely not to be placed on the shoulders of posterity; they should be paid for out of current revenue. Loans Bills encouraged extravagance and were altogether wrong in principle. Some of the works were estimated to occupy ten years or more in construction, so that, if the fixed charges increased at the same rate during that period as within recent years, there would be fixed charges amounting to nearly £3,000,000. That was an altogether too heavy permanent charge to hand on. The whole system of finance adopted in these Bills was as bad as it could be. It absolutely deceived the public, because in the present year they imagined the total expenditure on the Navy to be £36,800,000, whereas it really amounted to £42,000,000. As to Wei-hai-Wei he understood it had been abandoned as entirely unsuitable for a dockyard.

*MR. **ARTHUR LEE** pointed out that Wei-hai-Wei had not been abandoned for naval purposes, but merely as a fortified port.

MR. **O'MARA** said that as he was not an expert he would pass from that point. Large expenditure was to be incurred in connection with different ports in the Colonies. If Great Britain was to continue spending enormous sums on the ports of the Colonies, not for the benefit of this country, but purely for the benefit of the Colonies, was it not only fair that the Colonies should contribute adequately towards the cost? Why should this country bear the whole cost of fortifying the Colonies and protecting them against all possible invasion? The case of Canada was the worst of all, as the colony did not subscribe a single penny towards the upkeep of the Navy. Not only did we keep two regiments of soldiers at Halifax, but we were going to build a dockyard. It might be said it was for the North Atlantic Fleet, but what was the North Atlantic Fleet for but to protect the trade of Canada? £42,000 was to be spent at Sydney, and so the thing went on. Every time these matters came forward he was determined to protest as strongly as he could against this scandalous waste of British taxpayers' money for the benefit of the Colonies and their trade. The least the Colonies ought to do was to contribute to the Empire an amount equivalent to the actual cost of the local defence. The present contribution was so small as to be altogether negligable in considering the accounts. It was true that Natal made a small contribution of £50,000, but that was not enough to cover the expense they put us to. He trusted that, as a result of the representations he had made, that the Imperial Defence Committee would take into consideration the question of colonial contributions and request the Colonies to increase them to a sum at least adequate to defray the expenses of their own defence.

MR. **GIBSON BOWLES** (Lynn Regis) said it was only in recent years that the Admiralty had diverted its attention from the building of ships to bricks and mortar. In almost every case where the Admiralty had undertaken large works the expenditure had been grossly mistaken, and more mischievous than otherwise. Everything that caused their ships and crews to rely for protection upon bricks and mortar was a mistake. This was a Vote for £1,634,000 and it really represented no less than £31,000,000, which was the total amount of the loans during the last few years, and £600,000 of this amount represented the annuity that went to the extinction of the principal sum of those loans. The whole work in connection with loans was, therefore, in question in that £600,000, but in spite of that fact they had no details whatever as to the expenditure. A sound system of finance required that they should estimate their expenditure. Under the present system they took a lump sum of £31,000,000 and Parliament had no annual control over it. The Admiralty spent, what it pleased and in no year did Parliament receive any details of the expenditure. The Secretary to the Admiralty had stated that they did not know how much they were going to spend, and that was precisely his objection to the system. The result was that they were debating an expenditure of which they knew nothing, and which was to be applied to purposes of which they had no account whatever, That was a contradiction of the whole theory of finance in this country, and that constituted his objection to the loan works system. In the old days there was a Works Department, but this had now grown to such an extent that it overshadowed the Admiralty itself. It was this monstrous new Works Department which overshadowed everything else, and instead of having one Department of the Admiralty employed with this bricks and mortar business they now had two Departments. He hoped the First Lord of the Admiralty would consider the advisability of fusing those two Departments. He had no confidence in the Loans Department as a Department for conducting works, and he could give numerous instances of the way in which it had failed to discharge its duties efficiently, and therefore he hoped that some improvement would be made in this direction. He trusted that the very next time the Naval Works Bill was brought before the House hon. Members would refuse to assent to it until the Admiralty brought in the amount they wanted to spend year by year. These amounts should be submitted to the House in a way which enabled the Committee to deal with them, and the present abuse was a system which would have to be looked into very soon.

There was an item for accommodation of naval cadets at Osborne. The sum in 1904–5 was £54,550, and the total estimate for the work was £160,000. That was for buildings at Osborne. The other day they were told that other naval buildings at Osborne, for naval convalescents, could not be charged on the Naval Vote, and that it was necessary to charge them on the Vote for Royal Palaces, and the only compromise offered to them was that in future it should be made a separate Vote. If it was possible to put money in that Vote for the accommodation of naval cadets it could not be impossible to put in the same Vote the cost of new buildings for naval convalescents. The question he wished to ask was if it was not possible to put the Vote for naval convalescents into this Works Vote, how was it possible to put the Vote for cadets in? With regard to Hong-Kong it was an absolute fact that the most tremendous mistake had been made in the erection of a huge dock at Hong-Kong. He believed it had been found necessary to put a portion of the stores on the island. The result was that the necessary stores were divorced from the dockyard. He had also been informed that the greatest difficulty was to be found in the construction of the docks, and that the nature of the ground upon which the foundation rested was such that the greatest difficulty had been experienced, and it was the opinion of naval officers and others that an enormous mistake had been made in putting the docks where they were, because they were in the wrong place, and the Admiralty had resisted every suggestion to put them in the right place. As to Gibraltar he would say very little. The two reports which had been issued in regard to Gibraltar proved that he was right and the Admiralty were wrong. The only effect of those reports had been to expend more money upon high-angle guns. Dover was another tremendous mistake on the part of the Admiralty, for no battleship in modern days ought to be anywhere near Dover unless it was passing at full speed. Ships at Dover would be exposed to bombardment and torpedo boats, and one of the greatest mistakes ever made by the Admiralty was the construction of this enormous harbour at Dover. It was most unfortunate that all these millions were being plunged into the water at Dover. As to Wei-hai-Wei, he really did not know what to say about that interesting "watering-place." It was said some time ago that it was acquired as a reply to the Russian possession of Port Arthur. He did not know how its adequacy in that respect appeared in the light of recent events. There was a good deal of money being spent at Wei-hai-Wei on hospitals and canteens. He did not know for what purpose that port was being used. Certainly if it was a coaling station it did not require a hospital or a canteen. But that was the principal justification as far as he understood nowadays, of that most unfortunate adventure. If any other justification could be adduced for the retention of Wei-hai-Wei, perhaps the Committee would be told what it was. He hoped the Committee would appreciate the great danger there was in the extension of naval works, and more especially the danger of sanctioning year by year payments and annuities for enormous loans of which they had no details.

Mr. BROADHURST (Leicester) called attention to the reference on page 22 of the Statement by the First Lord of the Admiralty in regard to Keyham Dockyard extension. It was stated in regard to the "closed basin" that about 1,370,000 cubic yards of mud had been removed, and, in regard to the "tidal basin," that the enclosing walls were well in hand, and about 7,000 cubic yards of mud had been removed. These statements seemed to indicate that there were yet considerable contracts to be let in connection with the granite for the stonework along the sides of the docks.

He asked the Civil Lord whether he could give an approximate idea of the extent of these contracts. When the present Deputy Master of the Mint was Civil Lord of the Admiralty, some years back, attention was drawn to the fact that the contractor for the granite-work of the docks at Devonport was having the whole of the granite wrought in the North of Europe—he thought it was in Norway—and imported. The then Civil Lord refused to interfere, stating that it was no part of the Government system to interfere with work done abroad which was imported into the country. He was able to demonstrate to the officials at the time that the granite of Cornwall and Devonshire was as good as the Norwegian stone. In the opinion of an expert to whom he submitted specimens the English stone was better than that of Norway. From its composition it was calculated to last a longer time. What he wanted to know from the Civil Lord was whether there were large contracts yet to be let for granite-work, and, if so, whether he would see that conditions were laid down in the contracts that the stone would be wrought in this country. He made no complaint about the work being done cheaper. As a matter of fact he believed that in Norway wages were little more than half what they were in this country. If the taxpayers of this country were obtaining any share of the advantage of the cheapness it would be a different matter, but he understood that the contractor himself got the advantage. As a matter of fact the contractor sub-let the granite-work to people who could do it much cheaper than it could be done in this country. There ought to be no approach to sub-letting in dockyard work. It was important that the work should be done as accurately as possible in order to prevent the ingress of water, which in course of time might weaken and force out the walls. He was not going to say that Norway could not produce as good masons as Cornwall and Devonshire, but he would point out that in the sub-letting of this class of work there was the greatest danger of scamping. He expressed the hope that the Admiralty would exercise vigilant supervision over the works at Keyham Dockyard. If they would exercise the same supervision there which the Liverpool authorities had always done when building docks, he believed the country would get better value for the money expended than they probably got under this system of sub-contracting. The quarries in Cornwall were close to the waterside, and granite could be conveyed thence by boat to Devonport harbour. There would in that case be no difficulty in regard to land carriage such as there might be in the case of granite from Devonshire. He appealed to the hon. Gentleman to have this matter thoroughly gone into, and stated that he would be very glad to see him on the subject if he would do him the honour to discuss it with him.

MR. ARTHUR LEE said he fully recognised the special knowledge of the hon. Member for Leicester on this subject. The suggestion he had made in regard to contracts was worthy of the consideration of the Admiralty. So far as he was concerned he would only be too glad if the hon. Member would give them his advice on matters of this kind. In regard to the Keyham contract the question raised by the hon. Member was fully considered by the Admiralty at the time. It had been, and was, the policy of the Admiralty to have home materials used as far as possible, consistently with economy, in the construction of naval works. In the case of the Keyham contract an immense amount of granite was needed at the time, and the contractor was given permission to get the stone where he could, so long as it was up to a certain standard of excellence. As a matter of fact the amount of granite which was required could not be obtained at home in proper time. The hon. Member for King's Lynn had, in his criticism, tried to make him responsible not only for the policy of loans for naval works, approved by Parliament at various times since 1895, but also for many matters of policy assented to in previous years with regard to the construction of dockyards, and so forth. He was afraid that after his brief stay at the Admiralty he could not accept the whole responsibility for all that had been done by his predecessors as regarded the specific points raised. Then he thought that the hon. Gentleman advanced rather a wide proposition when he said that works like those at Gibraltar, instead of adding to the efficiency of the Fleet, rather deteriorated it; that they encouraged naval officers to rely too much on docks and breakwaters, and destroyed some of that spirit of naval daring which distinguished the British Navy of old. He could not think that there was any justification for the suggestion that the spirit of the British Navy had deteriorated as the result of naval works. It might as well be said that the introduction of armour-plates or any other protection on board ship had deteriorated the spirit of the Navy. Then his hon. friend found great fault with the Admiralty because they did not foresee with exactitude the expenditure that was to ensue on naval works. He would point out that it was impossible to estimate exactly what the expenditure on a particular work would be in any given year. He would give a concrete example. At Malta there were large works for the extension of the dockyard and the creation of breakwaters to make the harbour safe from probable attack. Only the other day a severe storm arose which destroyed the whole of the preliminary works by means of which these breakwaters were to be built. The result was that their progress would be delayed several months, and there would be a shortage of expenditure for the year.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he did not think he could have explained his point accurately to the hon. Gentleman. His complaint was that there were items on the Estimates for works, the expenditure on which was to be charged within the financial year but in respect of expenditure on loan works there was no estimate.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that an estimate had been made last year when the Naval Works Bill was introduced. What should be expended this year was the surplus remaining over after the expenditure of the past year. It was impossible to foresee what the expenditure would be all over the world two years in advance. The Admiralty merely took what they believed would be a reasonable expenditure from the amount granted by Parliament as a maximum. His hon. friend had made a violent attack on the Works Department of the Admiralty and on the Loans Works Department. That attack was unjust, because he thought that both these Departments were conducted in a most efficient and economic manner by their respective chiefs. He said this from his own knowledge, and he strongly resented any attack on these officials on the ground that they were not acting for the efficiency and economy of the public service. His hon. friend suggested that these two Departments should be fused into one and with that he entirely agreed. His hon. friend had also touched on the subject of Osborne, and particularly on the accommodation for the naval and military convalescent officers. That question had already been discussed on Civil Service Estimates, and as it had nothing to do with the Admiralty it was not his business to reply on it.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked if he was to understand the hon. Member to say that convalescent naval officers had nothing to do with the Admiralty.

MR. ARTHUR LEE said that all he meant was that the accommodation for convalescents at Osborne House did not come on the Admiralty Votes whilst the accommodation provided for the naval cadets at Osborne College had, however, to be paid for by the Admiralty. His hon. friend had referred to Hong-Kong, a place with which he himself was somewhat familiar. The hon. Gentleman laid down the proposition that the dockyard there was on the wrong site, and that the naval experts had united to condemn it. Well, of course, his hon. friend might have access to naval opinion which was not open to the Admiralty; but the professional naval advisers of the Admiralty, including the commander-in-chief on the China Station, unanimously approved of the site; in fact, it was selected on their representation, and he personally had no doubt whatever that the dockyard was in the right place. There were stories about that certain private persons who wanted the dockyard built elsewhere, spread rumours that there were difficulties in constructing the dockyard on the present site, but these difficulties had not been found. As to Gibraltar, he must say that, anticipating his hon. friend's criticism on the point, he had taken the precaution of visiting Gibraltar. His hon. friend said that the only result of all his labours in connection with Gibraltar had been the introduction of a few high-angle guns. He had great pleasure in giving his hon. friend the information that a new high-angle gun had been designed for that fortress, and there rumours from other sources that his hon. friend was taking very generous and and kindly interest in that particular gun, and the result would doubtless be an improvement in the shooting. He wished to thank the hon. Member for Dundee and other hon. Gentlemen for the very kind references made to himself on taking office. In the course of his previous remarks he ventured to state that Vote 10 had been starved in previous years; and he was thankful to the hon. Member for Dundee for having used stronger language—that this Vote had been snubbed and robbed. That accounted to a large extent for the necessity of expenditure for loans on naval works. The hon. Member had returned again to the question of the two-Power standard debated at such great length during the previous three days, and asked how far was it possible to compare our expenditure on naval works with foreign expenditure on ships.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that what he wanted was a comparison between the expenditure on naval works by this country and the corresponding expenditure on naval works by other nations.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said he must have misunderstood the hon. Gentleman. He thought the hon. Gentleman was making a comparison between our expenditure on naval works and the expenditure of foreign nations on ships. No comparison on the lines suggested by the hon. Gentleman was possible, because our needs for naval works were not comparable to those of foreign nations. But these foreign nations had found that ships were only a portion of their naval expenditure, and that they would have to expend large sums on dockyards and other naval works, in order to keep their ships in condition. He, however, contended that the requirements of the British Empire were unique in this particular. Ours was a world-wide Empire; we had more to defend; and therefore we required more naval bases than foreign nations. The hon. Gentleman the Member for East Perthshire referred to the understanding that although it might be necessary next year to ask for further money for the purpose of naval works, the Admiralty should give an undertaking that no new items should be put down. He had no hesitation whatever in repeating the assurance already given, that it was not proposed, as far as could possibly be foreseen, to introduce any new items next year. The hon. Gentleman said that they should build no more new docks; but they had not yet pledged themselves to the exact number of docks there would be at Rosyth when it was completed. His statement must be interpreted in that sense. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Dundee asked what the expenditure in the self-governing Colonies would be under Vote 10 this year. The total amount was about £70,000, but that expenditure was not for the benefit of the Colonies, but for the benefit of the Fleet generally. That he thought was a sufficient answer, and he did not think it would be desirable that he should attempt to discuss, on the present occasion, whether the Colonies should or should not make a larger contribution to the Navy, because this country would have no power to compel the Colonies in that direction even if it was thought desirable.

MR. O'MARA asked if representations had been made to the Colonies.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said it was not the business of the Admiralty to make representations to the Colonies.

*MR. O'MARA asked if the hon. Gentleman would ask the Secretary to the Colonies to make representations.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that, in the humble position which he had the honour to fill, he could not discuss matters of high policy of that kind. His hon. and gallant friend the Member for Yarmouth raised a very interesting point. He warned the Admiralty against the policy of constructing a dock for every ship. There was no intention on the part of the Admiralty of adopting any such far-reaching policy as that to which his hon. and gallant friend referred. With reference to the remark which he himself made about the lack of repairing and other facilities in the Far East which Russia possessed, all he ventured to suggest was that the policy of possessing harbours secured against torpedo attack had been amply justified by the course of events in the Far East. It would be impossible to conceive a more striking justification of that particular policy; and he did not suggest more than that. As to the specific question asked by his hon. friend with reference to the works on the new breakwater at Malta, he was at Malta himself a few weeks ago and saw the works. It was then pointed out that the staging which had been erected would not be strong enough to withstand one of the local storms, or *Gregales.* The contractors were quite satisfied that it would; but the power of the storm was justified by the result; and, unfortunately, a large portion of the preparatory work was swept away. The delay, however, would not be very great, possibly not more than three or four months, because the same contractors were engaged on the Dover harbour works, and they immediately sent out the necessary appliances which they had there. The contract provided that the dockyard extension at Malta should be finished by the end of 1904; but he was sorry to add that the progress made by the contractors had been most unsatisfactory. He went carefully into the matter on the spot, and the Admiralty found it necessary to take very strong steps in order to bring home to the contractors the necessity of more vigorous and scientific operations. Every effort, he believed, was now being made by the contractors to remedy their deficiencies in the past. The delay, however, was a serious matter, and he was glad his hon. friend had called attention to it.

An HON. MEMBER asked when the 3 dock at Gibraltar would be ready for use.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE said that that dock was practically complete and would be ready for the accommodation of ships in the course of the ensuing summer. The hon. Member for East Perthshire referred to the fact that there were some works of a large nature put down on the Votes and others paid for by way of loan. He would remind the hon. Gentleman that works loans were looked upon as a temporary expedient in order to provide for past deficiencies. It was not the policy of the Admiralty to depend in future on loans; and when the deficiencies of the past had been supplied, then nearly all the expenditure on works would fall on Vote 10.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked if they were to understand that it was the policy of the Admiralty to abandon Loan Acts in the near future.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE said he could not give any pledge, as that would depend entirely on naval requirements; but it was the hope of the Admiralty that they would be in a position to discontinue the system of borrowing for works, and to construct them out of the Estimates. It was obvious, however, that there must be a transition period, and they were now putting such works as they could on Vote 10. That accounted for some of the large items to be found on the Vote. Small items, although they might be regarded as permanent, would in any case be put on the Vote, as it was undesirable to borrow money for them. They included such items as that for Wei-hai-Wei. The hon. Gentleman referred to putting down a token sum as objectionable. He admitted that in one sense it was objectionable because it did not give a precise indication of what the future expenditure would be; but it was clear that in the case of large establishments, such as Rosyth, it was impossible, in the first instance, to estimate what the total expenditure would be. There was, in fact, a great deal of preliminary expenditure, such as the examination of the ground, borings, and so forth, before even a sketch estimate could be drawn up. That was the case in regard to Rosyth. The work was proceeding as rapidly as possible, and when the Admiralty had decided the matter they would take the House of Commons into their confidence. The hon. Gentleman also complained that the Committee was not told what approximately the total sum taken for the Coastguard stations was to be. He understood that his hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury informed the hon. Gentleman last year that the total sum would be, as nearly as it could be ascertained, about £500,000. Then the hon. Gentleman referred to the fact that certain of the Coastguard stations, which appeared on the Vote last year, had disappeared. The explanation of that was very simple. The stations that remained on the Vote were those on which work was already in progress, the remainder were transferred to Loan. Several hon. Gentlemen referred to a statement he made about the number of works which had been cut out. He did not claim any credit for that. It was the customary practice, and they had to cut their coat according to their cloth. It was the duty of the naval advisers of the Admiralty to put forward proposals for consideration by the Admiralty, which it was desirable and necessary to undertake, and then the Admiralty cut their coat according to their cloth.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, N.) asked if all Coastguard station expenditure was in future to be put to the loan account.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE said that all stations which had not yet been commenced would be charged to the loan account under last year's Act. His hon. friend the Member for Exeter cross-examined him very closely on a matter of high finance, for which he was not really responsible. His hon. friend objected to the system of annual Loan Bills. That was a perfectly reasonable objection to put forward; but the principle underlying those Bills had been sanctioned by the House of Commons in 1895, and frequently since. He did not think they could go back on them now. His hon. friend was entitled to his opinion; but the system had been sanctioned by the House of Commons. Complaint had been made that the Estimates did not show the total expenditure. It was obvious that with regard to these Loan Bills the totals could not be shown. But if it was of any convenience to hon. Members he would undertake in the future to circulate with the Estimates a separate statement showing the expenditure under those Loan Bills. With regard to the complaint of the hon. Member for Kilkenny that no pledge had been given that the Works Bill of last year was to be final, he might say that the Admiralty never pretended that it would be. The token sums put down clearly showed the contrary. With regard to Wei-hai-Wei, it was the original intention of the Government to hold the place as a fortified naval station. Some two years ago that intention was modified as the result of a conference between the naval, military, and colonial authorities, and it was then decided to hold it as a peace station and health resort, where the Fleet could go in the hot weather for shore exercise, and so forth. A small amount of coal, 6,000 or 10,000 tons, was kept there for the current needs of the ships, but it was not in the ordinary sense of the word a coaling station, which was generally a strongly fortified station, with a large supply of coal. A naval hospital and a canteen had also been established. The canteen was considered necessary, in order to supply good accommodation for the men, so that they might not go elsewhere.

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said he was encouraged by the explanations already given to ask one or two questions in connection with points on which he had some knowledge. He pointed out that on page 141 there was an item for the establishment of additional hospital accommodation at Queensferry. It was in the statement of the Civil Lord that in the next Loan Bill there would be a large demand for naval works across the water, and therefore he would like some explanation of this item, because he did not suppose it was the intention of the Government to ferry their sick across the Firth. He also asked as to the item of £11,000 for additional church accommodation at Deal, where he should have thought there was sufficient accommodation already. It was difficult to discuss subjects like Gibraltar and Dover, and other schemes of a like character, in full Committee of the House, but hon. Members would be grateful for the speech made by the hon. Member for Exeter, who had stated clearly and tersely what many had been thinking; and the representatives of the Admiralty would do well not to increase the feeling which existed in the country, that the full burden of the Navy expenditure had not been realised under this system of dividing the Works Department from the Estimates. He hoped the speech of the hon. Member for Exeter would not be lost on the Admiralty. There was also a feeling in the Committee that under this system of Works Bills they lost their control over expenditure where that control was most particularly required, because money easily acquired was easily parted with. Money raised by loan was more easily got than that raised by taxation, and the control of the expenditure of the money passed into the hands of experts, who could not assume that responsibility which Parliament must itself bear. It was a little difficult sometimes to draw a clear distinction between capital and current expenditure.

General LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) referred to an item of £10,000 for an official residence at Jamaica. It had been generally understood to be the intention of the Admiralty to concentrate the whole of our establishments in St. Lucia, but from this item it appeared as though a large establishment was still to be maintained at Jamaica. This was apparently such an absolute change of policy that he thought the Committee were entitled to some explanation from the representative of the Admiralty with regard to it.

Mr. LOUGH pointed out that the whole of the growth in this Vote was accounted for by the increased payments of interest on capital expenditure, and the increased amount of interest was of course due to the greater amount of annual expenditure arranged for by loan instead of being met by the ordinary Estimates. The amount was now so large that the Committee might well pause and insist on the Admiralty giving some definite pledge in the matter. Ten years ago this Vote amounted to only £400,000; now, mainly owing to the borrowing, it was £1,600,000. The larger the amount raised by loan, the greater this Vote became. The borrowing system was not economical, and really conferred no benefit whatever on the nation. All it did was to relieve that Department, and to assist through his difficulties the poor struggling Gentleman who had to defend the Estimates. It would be much better if the nation furnished the necessary money every year as it was required. Twenty years ago the total annual expenditure on capital account was only £40,000; it was now £9,500,000, and the largest items were connected with the Navy. The vicious system which was started by the Navy had spread to the Army and the Civil Services, and instead of the nation meeting the expenditure of the year out of taxation they really did not know where they were, since, owing to the development of this system, they did not know what the annual expenditure really was. Instead of giving a definite answer to the criticisms which had been made, the Admiralty had confessed that even the money for the maintenance of Coastguard stations was now to be borrowed.

*__Mr. ARTHUR LEE__: Not the maintenance, but the cost of construction.

Mr. LOUGH contended that such a course would tend to extravagance. So small an item ought to be borne on the Estimates of the year, and if it was proposed now to inaugurate this system the Committee ought to protest against it. The increase for loans this year was £130,000; next year it would be £200,000; the year after it would probably amount to £250,000; and so the increase would go on. In a very few years the nation would have lost whatever advantage it might appear to derive from the system of borrowing. It would be much better for the Admiralty to stop the system at once, to have no more of these Loan Bills, and to provide each year on the Votes the amount they required. It was impossible to repeal the Bills already passed. The money had been borrowed and would have to be repaid. But no Bill had been passed which would carry on the Admiralty for more than about two years, and he suggested that in that interval the whole system should be reconsidered. The nation was kept in ignorance of the true position of its finances. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would say in his Budget statement that £7,000,000 had been paid off the National Debt, and the country would be unaware that another £9,000,000 had been borrowed for works. This was one of the most serious items of our national expenditure, because it was so subtle, and it invited extravagance instead of leading to economy. He hoped the Committee would insist on having a clear and definite statement from the Secretary to the Admiralty on the matter.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) expressed his concurrence in the views just expressed, and supported the appeal of the hon. Member for Exeter. He had made a calculation as to the cost of the work done under the present system, and he found that for every £100, in value, the nation had to spend £150. That showed how serious a matter it was. In about five years there would be no saving even in the annual expenditure. The loans were mounting up at the rate of £7,000,000 or £8,000,000 a year, with the result that when about half the thirty years period was over the country would be worse off than if they had never started the system. It merely led to extravagance, and hid from the country the real expenditure that was going on. It was a pity there had not been a representative of the Treasury present during the debate. These Bills not only came up every two years, but they tended to increase in amount, and to throw a greater burden on posterity, who would doubtless have a sufficiently heavy load of their own to carry. The time had come when a stop should be put to the system, and the Committee should follow the advice of the hon. Member for King's Lynn and refuse to sanction the passage of any more of these Loan Bills, even though they were introduced at the fag-end of the session when the House was not in a proper condition to discuss them. Another matter he had examined into was as to the amount of the works in progress in regard to which the Estimates had been revised during the last twelve months, and he found that there had been increases to the extent of £422,000, and decreases to the extent of £80,000, or a net increase of £340,000.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE asked whether the hon. Member included in that sum the increases under G.G.; if so, he could explain those.

MR. WHITLEY said he proposed to move an Amendment on that Vote. He was simply stating that works for which a revised Estimate was now submitted, as compared with twelve months ago, showed an increase of £340,000, which ranged over something like twenty-four or twenty-five different items. How were they to have any control over expenditure if they were asked to vote money on the face of certain Estimates, and twelve months afterwards they were told by means of foot-notes that they had been revised to the extent of £340,000. There were several other matters in this Vote which required careful examination, and when the general discussion had been completed he proposed to move one or two reductions.

*MR. PRETYMAN said that whilst admitting the inconveniences that resulted from the method of constructing works by means of loans he wished to remind the Committee that it was a policy deliberately adopted by the House at the instance of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth and the hon. Member for Dundee, and if he remembered rightly—and perhaps the hon. Member for Dundee would bear him out in this—the principle then laid down, upon which this loan system was founded, was the principle of distributing the cost of the great works, of which many generations would derive the benefit, over a considerable period of years. Inasmuch as these works themselves were not attractive, and in some cases were many thousand miles away from the House of Commons, they loomed very small indeed in the memory, or imagination, or view of most hon. Members of this House. Naturally hon. Members looked more to the finance of the question, and when the bill for the works came in, objection was very naturally taken to it. He could thoroughly sympathise with that view, but the one point which critics appeared to lose sight of, was the fact that the works were there, and represented every penny bestowed upon them, and future generations, when called upon to pay this money would actually have the works and the full value for this money. As had been stated by the Civil Lord, if there was one lesson they had been taught from the situation in the Far East it was the wisdom of the policy inaugurated by the Gentlemen on the Benches opposite, of borrowing money in order to construct these great harbours to provide shelter for our Fleet. His impression was that the House of Commons deliberately preferred and deliberately instituted the policy of borrowing money for these great works, and preferred that it should be raised on loan instead of out of the money voted each year. If the House of Commons preferred to find the money each year, it would not be for the Admiralty to raise any objection, for they would be quite prepared to ask for the money which they considered absolutely required every year to meet naval needs. This money was as necessary as the money for ships, and Parliament had already decided that the money should be found in this manner. He shared the views expressed as to the inconvenience this method presented in many aspects, but, after all, that inconvenience arose principally from the fact that it was always objectionable to have to pay for anything. Nobody liked to pay when the bill came in, and, whatever form the bill was presented in, it was customary that some objection should be taken to it. It was not for the Admiralty now to defend that financial policy; they had simply to submit the sums they considered necessary for the needs of the Navy. In doing that he was anxious to give every possible information to facilitate control of expenditure by the House. The works represented full value for the money, but the real difficulty was that effective criticism was not possible without some knowledge of the material aspect of the works, their magnitude, and character. Any pertinent criticism of these works must come from some actual knowledge of the works. He remembered last year attempting to give to the House the best information he could of the works extending over this vast area, and he believed that he wearied the House in doing it, but he did it with the object of putting the House in possession of that information which would give them the power of control and criticism.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.) said this debate was an example of the soft words of a Minister turning away wrath. He

was sorry that the Secretary of State for War was not there to see the effect on the business of this House of courtesy and good temper. The hon. Gentleman opposite had stated that the Government had no power to compel the Colonies to refund the money spent for their benefit upon the Fleet, and he went on to assure the House that he was too obscure a member of the Government to suggest that the Colonies should be called upon to contribute more. But the hon. Gentleman and his colleague were the representatives of the Admiralty, and if they could not make representations to the Colonial Department he did not know who could. Canada did not subscribe a cent to the upkeep of the Navy, and he thought she ought to be ashamed of herself. The hon. Member for Galway was always ready to defend Canada, but he was very silent upon this question of naval expenditure. He thought that the Colonies which received a portion of this enormous grant ought to pay their share. He urged that in common fairness rich colonies like Canada should make some contribution towards expenditure which was a heavy burden on the poverty of Ireland. He also desired to know how much had been spent on Wei-hai-Wei, and if the place had any other use than as a naval health resort.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway) said the hon. Member for South Down had called attention to a defence he made only yesterday of the position taken by Canada, where he had spent most of his life. He was an Irish representative, and he would remind his hon. friends that it was in that capacity that he criticised the Estimates. If Canada did not contribute to the Navy it was because she believed in Home Rule. Canada had the power of levying taxes, and did not propose to delegate to a Government in which it was not represented, the power of spending its money. The expenditure at Halifax for the construction of a wharf was not at all for the benefit of Canada, but for the benefit of the British Navy. He thought it was the right of the Nationalist Members to criticise these matters. They came from a country which had to bear a heavy portion of the taxation required for the payment of the large sums spent on naval works. Money had been spent on the South, North, and East Coasts, but what about the West? When the Admiralty had so much money to expend on these matters he wondered whether they could not establish a dockyard in the West of Ireland. The Irish taxpayers were asked to contribute their share of the cost of naval expenditure, but there was no disposition on the part of the Admiralty, or any other department of the Government, to return to Ireland a share of the money taken from her. They protested against the obligation imposed on them by the Government for works with which they had no sympathy.

Mr. WHITLEY called attention to Item A for "Salaries and Allowances of Superintending Officers and others." He pointed out that the Estimate this year for twenty-six civil engineers was £9,363, while last year the amount for twenty-five civil engineers was £3,856. That was an increase of more than 100 per cent. on the Estimate, though there was a increase of one on the staff. There was an Estimate of £1,824 for nine assistant surveyors, as against £765 last year for eight assistant surveyors. In this case the increase on the Estimate was considerably over 100 per cent., though there was only an increase of one on the staff. He moved to reduce the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries and Allowances of Superintending Officers and others) be reduced by £1,000."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

*Mr. PRETYMAN said the figures in the Estimates were rather difficult to understand. The fact was that there had been a reorganisation of the department, and on the recommendation of a Committee that sat during the year the numbers and scales of pay of the various grades had been changed. He would be glad to send a statement to the hon. Gentleman showing exactly how these figures were explained.

Mr. O'MARA said it would save a great deal of time if the hon. Gentleman would send the explanatory note to all Members of the House.

*Mr. PRETYMAN said he would send it to any hon. Member who expressed a wish for it.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said the figures as they stood were quite wrong.

Mr. WHITLEY said that after the explanation given he would withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. WHITLEY said that Items B andC, Dockyards at Home and Abroad, required some explanation on account of the discrepancies between the estimates and the actual cost of works under construction. The rate of increase was a serious matter, which ought to have the attention of the hon. Gentleman. There should be some better method of estimating the cost of these works, because, to his mind, the present system gave no real estimate at all. He had made out a list of discrepancies ranging from £3,000 to £23,500. Of course he could understand that there would be variations, and if the variations up had been balanced by the variations down he would not have complained so much; but that was by no means the case. He begged to move to reduce this item by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item B (Dockyards at Home) be reduced by £1,000."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE said that it was impossible to estimate in many cases the exact amount that the works would cost until the tenders had been actually received. In several instances there had been decreases, and he called attention to the item for new works in the dockyards at home, where the decrease was from £186,000 to £125,000. That decrease was due to the fact that the Department found they could do the foundations themselves much more cheaply than under contract, and also to the favourable condition of the iron market. He thought that the hon. Gentleman would find that the discrepancies between the increases and the decreases were not so great as he imagined, with perhaps the exception of item G.G.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland) said it would be a great advantage if in the future there should appear a column showing the total original Estimate, so that hon. Members might be able to compare the Estimate and cost at once.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE thought that the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman was a very reasonable one, and he would see if it could be carried out next year.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. BUCHANAN said that on item C, there was a sum for the renewal of buildings of the hydraulic dock at Malta. Might he ask, was not that hydraulic dock paid for out of Loan money?

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that it had been found that the dock was not capable of doing effective work in its present condition, and therefore there required to be a renovation of the buildings.

MR. BUCHANAN said that this was a salient case in which the two systems of carrying out works were mixed up together—out of Loan money, and out of annual Estimates. That was what hon. Members had been protesting against so often, and in order to take notice of it he moved the reduction of the Vote by £1,000.

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item C (Dockyards Abroad) be reduced by £1,000."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said that the Committee had been given excuses for this system of borrowing money; but the hon. Gentlemen representing the Admiralty were not responsible for its introduction. He did not object to loan expenditure on large works; but now all sorts of small works such as Coastguard stations had been introduced. The Committee had a right to complain that in this purely financial debate no representative of the Treasury was present. The question was one almost entirely for the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would remind the hon. Member that a reduction has been moved on a particular item, and that he must confine himself to it.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said that money to be spent at Malta under the Vote was mixed up with money from the Loans Act; and his point was that that was a financial question in which not only the Admiralty but the Treasury also was concerned. He maintained it was the business of the Treasury to give the Committee an explanation. He regretted very much that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not present when such questions were under discussion.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said he sympathised to the fullest extent with the complaint of the hon. Member who had just spoken, with reference to the absence of any representative of the Treasury. As far as matters of detail were concerned, the Committee obtained from the Secretary to the Admiralty and the Civil Lord of the Admiralty all the information they possessed. But he said with great respect that, in his opinion, and he believed in the opinion of other hon. Members also, when the Committee was engaged in discussing the expenditure of large sums, it was little short of a scandal that no representative of the Treasury was present. It was the business and the duty of both the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary to the Treasury to be present, and hear what hon. Members had to say with reference to such expenditure. It spoke very little for the respect which every member of the Administration ought to have for the House of Commons, that the representatives of the Treasury were invariably absent on such occasions. British Members might be content to be flouted in this manner, but he and other Irish Members did not take that view. His objection to the Vote was that dockyards abroad, although doubtless they were necessary for the upkeep and convenience of the Fleet, were matters for which the Irish people ought not to be called on to spend any money. He had no doubt that the Secretary to the Admiralty could give many excellent reasons why the naval depots should be maintained. But his constituents had not the slightest interest in the expenditure of a single farthing in Wei-hai-Wei. He denied that the Irish people got any return at all for such expenditure. None of the money was spent in Ireland; and even if there were any attempt to bribe the Irish people by large or small expenditure it would not change his view or the views of his constituents. Even if dockyards were established in Ireland he would still oppose the Vote, because generally speaking the Irish people derived no benefit from the Fleet and ought not to be called upon to pay for it. It was perfectly true that the Colonies paid scarcely anything for the upkeep of the Navy, although considerable sums of money were spent in the Colonies in connection with it. He did not blame the Colonies for making the best bargain they could. They would be fools if they paid a single farthing more for the maintenance of the Navy, when they found they could get anything they wanted for a ridiculously small sum. Indeed the Colonies were to be congratulated on the good bargain they had made. It was, however, an outrage on the very name of justice to call upon poor Irish taxpayers to pay for dockyards abroad when the people most concerned were not called upon to pay a single shilling. Was that fair or just or right? He objected to the Vote simply on the ground that it was not right to impose a proportion of this taxation on Ireland against the will of the Irish people and in view of the fact that Ireland derived no benefit whatever from it. The Civil Lord of the Admiralty answered the Questions put to him in a very courteous and obliging manner. He made no complaint of the hon. Gentleman and he did not intend to make any attack on officials who were doing their best to explain the position to the House. He took, broadly, the ground that Ireland derived no benefit from the increased expenditure on the Navy and had no sympathy with it. The Civil Lord of the Admiralty, in order to be able to answer Questions, himself went to Malta in order to see how matters stood there. It was an heroic undertaking and he congratulated the hon. Gentleman on it. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would visit the other dockyards in different parts of the Empire, and be able to ascertain how much benefit they were to the localities in which they were situated, which might induce him to agree that some contribution should be given by those districts.

* MR. ARTHUR LEE said he thought he could remove the difficulty raised by the hon. Member for Perthshire, on his Motion for a reduction, by saying that in regard to the hydraulic dock the £17,000 required for the original purchase had been provided out of Vote 10 last year.

MR. BUCHANAN said if there was no loan money involved in that matter that met his case, and he begged to withdraw his Motion for a reduction.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Motion again proposed.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Then I press my Amendment.

Motion made, and Question put, "That Item C (Dockyards Abroad) be reduced by £4,600."—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 102; Noes, 251. (Division List No. 38.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway

Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Doogan, P. C.
Farrell, James Patrick
Ffrench, Peter
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Hammond, John
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allen, Charles P.
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. SirH
Austin, Sir John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A.J.(Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, T.Gibson (King'sLynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt.Hn.J.A.(Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crombie, John William
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dewar, Sir T.R.(TowerHaml'ts
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Faber, George Denison, (York)
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.Sir J.(Manc.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hn. S.F.Ormsby-(Linc.)
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, Henry D.(Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton,Marq of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd.,Tottenham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks., N. R.)
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire

Kearley, Hudson E.
Keswick, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N.R.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, W.J.H.(Dumfriessh.)
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir FrederickG.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Paulton, James Mellor
Peel, Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Richards, Henry Charles
Ritchie, Rt.Hn.Chas.Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. (Stopford
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seely, Maj.J.E.B.(Isleof Wight
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E.(W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'd Univ
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir WilliamH.
Walton, Jn. Lawson (Leeds,S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warde, Colonel C, E.
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G.E.(Notts.
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrighston, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Original Question again proposed.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY [First Allotted Day].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904-5.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,634,200, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other Charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

Mr. O'MARA asked for some explanation of the item of £9,000 for victualling stores at Sydney, which item he thought was a token Vote and the commencement of a high expenditure that was going to b made in the Colonies.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley) drew attention to the item of £8,000 for dredging at Wei-hai-Wei. It was, he said, originally intended that Wei-hai-Wei should be held as a counterpoise to Port Arthur; then it was to be held as a secondary naval base; and finally he understood it was to be a kind of sanatorium for the Fleet on the China Station. If that were so it was difficult to see why this amount for dredging should be included in this Vote. Either there had been at the outset a very serious lack of judgment on the part of the advisers of the Government or their present decision to constitute it a sanatorium was a still greater mistake in judgment. In order to extract some explanation he moved to reduce the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed "That Item C (Dockyards Abroad) be reduced by £1,000." (*Mr. Joseph Walton.*)

Mr. ARTHUR LEE again explained the position with regard to Wei-hai-Wei, and pointed out that even for a peace station and sanatorium for the Fleet on the China station it was necessary to provide berthing accommodation in the harbour for the ships that would go there. Turning to the point raised by the hon. Member for Galway, who objected to the expenditure in regard to dockyards abroad on the ground that none were to be established in Ireland, he (Mr. Lee) called attention to the fact that the expenditure for naval establishments was not made for the benefit of the localities in which those establishments were situated, but for the general advantage and the needs of the Fleet. The item for the extension of hospital accommodation at Queensferry was for the purpose of erecting an isolation hospital for infectious cases, which was absolutely necessary. With regard to the church accommodation at Deal he pointed out that in recent years the number of marines stationed there had been very largely increased, and owing to the lack of proper accommodation it had been found necessary to use the existing church for school purposes, which was not at all desirable, and it was necessary that these men should be provided with a proper place of worship. He had been asked as to the item for the official residences in Jamaica. There were three such residences which were used by officers on the naval establishment, but they had fallen into such an insanitary condition that it was now necessary to expend this money in reproviding them. The item in respect to the victualling stores at Sydney was rather a measure of economy. At present we were hiring and paying very heavily for accommodation for victualling stores, and as Sydney was now becoming a great victualling centre, it was thought desirable to build our own accommodation and thus save the heavy expense we were now put to. The expenditure in respect to the coastguard stations was, for precisely the same reason, also a measure of economy—it being less expensive to build than to hire. He hoped the hon. Member for Barnsley would be satisfied with the explanation which he had given with regard to Wei-hai-Wei, and would now withdraw his Motion for a reduction.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON, by leave of the Committee, withdrew his Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER said the real objection to the Vote for victualling accommodation at Sydney was that the Colonies had not been asked to subscribe towards the expenditure The Vote which he desired to criticise, and which he would have to move a reduction of, was Vote E, "Chatham, residence of Commander-in-Chief, £25,000," £7,000 of which was to be spent this year. No doubt Commanders-in-Chief required houses to live in, but the Commander-in-Chief of Chatham had been living elsewhere up to the present, and this expenditure at the present juncture was not necessary. He thought this was a most inopportune time for starting a work which was not absolutely necessary. The present state of the finance of the country was not satisfactory. In his belief a good deal of the depression from which we were now suffering was due to the over-expenditure by the Government, and it was the duty of the Committee to object to fresh expenditure of every kind which was not absolutely necessary for the defence of the country. This was an item which should be put aside until either it was absolutely necessary or until such time as the finances of the country were in better order than they were at present. He thought it would be much cheaper to give an allowance, as was done in many cases, in lieu of a house, and that would not only meet the view of the officer in question but would also benefit the Exchequer. He begged to move a reduction of the Vote by the amount that was to be expended this year, namely, £7,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item E (Naval Barracks and General Fleet Services), be reduced by £7,000."—(*Mr. Courtenay Warner.*)

MR. BROADHURST expressed the opinion that the hon. Member might have gone further. It appeared to him that the Commander-in-Chief would have to have a considerable private income in addition to his pay to keep up such an establishment as it was proposed to erect, and which would be equal to a house of a rental of £1,000 a year. Years ago he had been to Chatham on Government business and had had the honour of being entertained by the Admiral in charge. So far as his memory served him the establishment at which he was entertained was nothing at all approaching this one which it was proposed to build. If the Civil Lord had been more familiar with this part of the country he would know that Chatham was the cheapest part to build in, inasmuch as it was the centre of the brick-making and cement industries, and in his judgment a house costing £6,000, or £8,000 at the outside, would be quite sufficient to meet all the demands that could be reasonably made by any officer holding this great position. By erecting a house of these dimensions the Government were going to make it impossible for any man who had to live upon his pay to maintain his position, and he hoped in the interest of the Service that hon. Members would cut down some of this enormous expenditure and thus do a service to those who might hereafter be called to this high office. As he understood, the average duration of this office would be three years, and a poor Admiral would not be able to support so great a burden as the maintenance of such an establishment. He appealed to the representatives of the Admiralty not to pursue a policy which provided only for men who had vast means. On these grounds he thought the Civil Lord ought to give the Committee some explanation of this item.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that this matter had been most carefully considered. Although he might not be very familiar with this part of Kent, he was at least familiar with this particular problem, having studied it on the spot. The Admiral's house at Chatham to which the hon. Member had referred was not the house of the Commander-in-Chief, but the house of the Admiral Superintendent of Chatham Dockyard, and it would remain in the occupation of that official The residence of the Commander-in-Chief of the Nore was not at Chatham at all, but at Sheerness, and as a matter of naval policy, which had been very carefully considered, it had been decided to be entirely wrong that the Commander-in-Chief of the Nore should live at Sheerness while the bulk of his work connected with the growing dockyard at Chatham was many miles distant. Communication between the two places was not at all convenient, and as a result there had been an inevitable lack of supervision in some respects. In time of peace such an arrangement was bad enough, but in time of war it would be absolutely impossible. Having decided that the Commander-in-Chief should live at Chatham, the question then arose of finding a house suitable for an officer in his position. The hon. Member for Leicester was really mistaken in supposing that Chatham was a cheap neighbourhood.

MR. BROADHURST said he referred to bricks and cement.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE reminded the hon. Member that fish was always dearer at the sea-side than elsewhere, and in the same way bricks and cement might not be so cheap at the place of manufacture as in other districts. In any case, it was the fact that the cost of building was very high at Chatham. This expenditure included not only the building, but also the site. The greatest difficulty of the Admiralty had been to get any land whatsoever at Chatham, the whole district being so extremely crowded. This particular piece of land belonged to the War Department; it was the site of one of the War Department's Stores, and naturally that accommodation would have to be reprovided. About £5,000 had been included for that purpose, so that the estimated expenditure on the house was approximately £20,000. He fully sympathised with the view that it should not be made impossible for men without large private means to occupy these positions; he had frequently taken up a similar position with regard to Army commands; but it had to be remembered that a naval officer received certain allowances which other officers did not receive, and, although he had been anxious to build a somewhat smaller house in this case, so far from receiving any assistance in that direction from the naval officers concerned, complaints had been received to the effect that the proposed residence was not large enough. The building would provide no more accommodation than was absolutely necessary for an officer in this high position, and he was afraid the Estimate could not be reduced without rendering the house unsuitable for the purpose for which it was designed.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork County, N.) did not consider the explanation of the Civil Lord at all satisfactory. Sheerness was near the mouth of the Nore, and was an ideal place for the residence of the Commander-in-Chief of the Nore. As for his work at Chatham Dockyard, the South-Eastern and Chatham Railway had not a high reputation for speed or punctuality, but it was possible to get from Sheerness to Chatham within half an hour on any day of the week. With regard to the cost of the building, Kent was the cheapest part of the country for the principal materials, and the greatest brickfields and the largest cement manufactories were in the neighbourhood of Chatham. It was necessary that these comparatively small details of the Estimates should be examined; it was only in that way the Departments could be urged to economy. As an Irish Member he complained that while £25,000 was to be spent on the erection of this one house at Chatham, the whole of the new works for naval purposes in Ireland amounted to less than half that sum. Another matter of which he strongly complained was the proposed expenditure of £58,600 at Wei-hai-Wei, which had been practically deserted, as valueless as a naval base. It could not be too often repeated that full-dress debates on the Estimates would not reduce expenditure; it could only be done by carefully scrutinising every item, and he hoped his hon. friend would press his Motion to a division.

*Mr. HELME (Lancashire, Lancaster) desired to know how many square yards the site comprised, and whether the existing buildings were dilapidated or unsuited to the purposes to which they were put. He pressed upon the Committee the necessity of seeing that the conditions under which our commanders lived and carried on their work were such that these positions were open to men of moderate means. He appealed to the Government to reconsider the question of spending £25,000 for a house for the officer in question, as it was unreasonable to expect him to keep up an establishment in keeping with the same out of the salary and allowances of the post.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE pointed out that the Commander-in-Chief's house was not merely a social residence; it included a large range of offices for the staff and retinue, and that, of course, considerably increased the cost.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON regretted to say that the explanation of the Civil Lord was not by any means satisfactory. He asked the Committee to consider the question in the light of the income which the Commander-in-Chief of the Nore received. His total income would be about £3,300, yet a residence was to be provided, the equivalent rental of which would be £1,000 a year. Everybody knew that house-rent ought not to be more than the tenth of one's income. Nobody could hold this position of Commander-in-Chief, and occupy a £25,000 house, unless he possessed a substantial private income.

When they were told by the Government that the trade of the country was going to the dogs he thought it was an inopportune moment to saddle the taxpayers with this excessive expenditure for the provision of a house for the Commander-in-Chief. He asked the Government to give further consideration to the matter.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB, while fully appreciating the motives by which the last two speakers were animated, considered it necessary, in the interests of the naval service, that the head of the Navy at a particular port should have a proper residence. This was not merely a private residence; as the Civil Lord had pointed out, it included a suite of offices. The house was furnished and kept in repair by the Government. It should be remembered that the Commander-in-Chief had to take a certain position, and that when foreign officers and our own, with their wives, visited the port, hospitality had to be extended to them. It was not to the interest of the naval service that the Commander-in-Chief should be put into a pokey house. There was really no question of putting any burden on the officer who happened to occupy the position.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said the case put by the Civil Lord was that the Admiralty were not purchasing any land for this building; they were knocking down a building on land belonging to the War Office. He had not told them whether the buildings were fit for the purpose to which they were put, and, of course, the buildings must be replaced on some other site. It seemed to him extraordinary to knock down buildings, which, as far as they knew, were perfectly suitable for the purpose. He asked the Civil Lord to tell them plainly whether these buildings were fit for the purpose for which they were erected, whether a site could have been obtained elsewhere, and, if so, whether it would cost more than the site which would be secured by the demolition of these buildings.

MR. ARTHUR LEE said the Department searched the whole of Chatham, which was a district in which there was extreme difficulty in getting land, and they found it impossible to get any other suitable site at any reasonable price. This particular site was a portion of the old fortifications on Chatham Lines. Formerly it was used for the purposes of a magazine, but it was no longer suitable for that. Of course they had agreed to give the War Office other accommodation in exchange for this, which was being used for the storage of bedding. On the whole he thought they had made the most economical arrangement possible.

MR. TOULMIN (Bury, Lancashire) thought a little more regard should have been had for the feeling of the taxpayers. They were looking forward to a deficit in the next Budget, and surely this expenditure might at least have been delayed a year or two. It seemed to him that £25,000 was a lot of money to spend on providing a house for the Admiral and his staff. They did not know what the furniture would cost. He did not feel that a case had been made out for this demand, and he thought the Government would be well advised to let the scheme stand over for a year or two until the national finances were in a more satisfactory position.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs) asked how many square yards the site comprised, and how many rooms the building would contain. How, too, had the staff been accommodated hitherto? Was it reasonable to provide a house worth £1,250 a year for an officer whose salary was only £3,300?

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said the area of the site approximated three acres. He had already dealt with the other point.

SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington) asked how much of the building would be set apart for officers.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: At least a quarter of it.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES: What is the necessity for taking three acres of land?

MR. BROADHURST observed that the taking of so large a site would involve at least an annual outlay of £200 for gardening purposes. He thought it was time to abandon the idea that the country should pay heavy sums to enable Government officials to entertain their friends and neighbours at the public cost.

An HON. MEMBER: It is to entertain foreigners.

Mr. BROADHURST said they were not always entertaining foreigners. He did not mind so much the grants made to Ambassadors abroad for the purpose, but at home there was far too much in both services of the tendency to create exclusive social circles in the neighbourhood in which Government officials were planted. There was too much extravagant entertaining of certain classes, and it was inimical to the best interests of the service.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER said he had been interested in building operations for many years, and he should have thought it quite possible to provide a suitable house at Chatham for £15,000. It was time they protested against the expenditure of public, money unless it was absolutely necessary in these lean years. Nothing had yet been said to prove the necessity of moving the Admiral's establishment from Sheerness to Chatham.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 107; Noes, 163. (Division List No. 39.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Emmott, Alfred
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Hammond, John

Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.

Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Warner and Mr. Broadhurst.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.HughO

Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert

Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt.Hn. A. J.(Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.

Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.)
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hn. S.F.Ormsby-(Linc.)
Greene, Henry D.(Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Hamilton, Marq of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Henderson, Sir A.(Stafford, W.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks., N. R.)
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Keswick, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Sir Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow.
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool.
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hon. M. W.(Stalybridge
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B.(Isle of Wight
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'd Univ
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und. Lyne
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury) called attention to sums in the Estimates in respect of new churches at Eastney and Deal. In the case of Eastney the sum asked was £8,000. The estimated total cost of the church was £11,000. The Vote now proposed in the case of Deal was £1,000, the total estimated cost of the church being £11,000. Whatever might be the necessity for church accommodation at the places named, he was sure it was not the business of the Admiralty to further endow the Established Church. He presumed that the churches would be under the control of the Church of England. He protested against this expenditure, especially in the present year, when the Estimates were so large. He moved to reduce the Vote by £2,000 in respect of these new churches.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item F (Marine Barracks) be reduced by £2,000."—(*Mr. Runciman.*)

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said the existing accommodation at Eastney was quite unfit for the purpose of Divine service, which was attended by a preponderant number of the Marines established there. In regard to the price he did not think the estimate extravagant, though it had been increased by £1,000. That was owing to a slight miscalculation in the first place. In the case of Deal there had been a large increase in the number of men, and there was not sufficient church accommodation for them.

Mr. RUNCIMAN said the hon. Gentleman had not stated whether those buildings were to be used exclusively by the Established Church, or whether grants had been given to any other denominations in those two places.

*Mr. HELME asked how many sittings were to be provided in each, as it was important to see that the churches, while providing the accommodation required, were not so constructed architecturally as to involve needless expenditure.

Mr. BROADHURST asked what would be done in respect of these churches, if they were to be used as Established Churches, in the event of disestablishment and disendowment. Would they come under any scheme of compensation given for that purpose? The money now proposed to be voted came out of the pockets of people of all religious denominations. He was in favour of providing ample accommodation for religious services for sailors and soldiers, but he would suggest that in future such buildings should be placed at the disposal, at certain times, of ministers of other denominations besides the Church of England, and should be called Gospel halls. Neither the Navy nor the Army consisted of men of one religious denomination.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said it seemed to him that this was rather a large question. He should like to know whether the Marines were obliged to go to church, and for how many it was proposed to provide accommodation in these churches. In London only 18 per cent. of the people went to any church at all, and it might be supposed that only 18 per cent. of the Marines would go to any church. The hon. Gentleman should remember that certainly not

Mr. Arthur Lee.

more than half of the inhabitants of this country belonged to the Church of England. There were a great many Irishmen and Scotsmen in the Navy who did not belong to the Church of England, and the Admiralty had no right to spend such large sums on the Church of England, which was in no way superior to any other church. He asked whether churches would be built equally for Presbyterians and Roman Catholics and Marines of other denominations. Assuming that they had to build a church for the Church of England, he should say that £2,000 would be an excessive amount to spend upon it. [An Hon. Member: What are you?] When Mr. Disraeli was asked what his religion was he said his religion was that of men of common sense, and when he was further asked what that religion was he said that sensible men did not tell other people what their religion was.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: They are all Confucians over there.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said they knew that hon. Gentlemen opposite were going to introduce Chinese in South Africa. The next thing would be to introduce them into this country. The Government must not suppose that hon. Members on this side of the House who did not belong to the Church of England were going to vote money for the building of churches of that denomination. This sort of thing ought to be stopped. There must be religious equality if there was to be expenditure on religious matters. There must be equality between all sects. The Admiralty were acting in this matter most unfairly and imprudently.

Mr. O'MARA said he was sorry this question of religion had arisen. They were discussing the Navy and not the question of religion. He objected to the Vote on the ground that the people of Ireland would have to pay their contribution for these churches, though they were mostly Roman Catholics. If the Admiralty were going to provide Church of England services for the Marines, they ought to build other churches for those who did not belong to that Church. He hoped that his friends above the gangway would allow the Committee to proceed to the discussion of more important matters.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said there was a very big principle involved in this question. He represented a constituency which was overwhelmingly Catholic in religion. Why should they be called upon to contribute a single farthing towards the erection of a church to which they did not belong? This proposal only illustrated the injustice, in his opinion, of having any established religion at all. He would be the last person in this House to say one word disrespectful of the Established Church of this country, but was it too much to ask that the people he represented should have their feeling respected in this matter? The members of the Established Church in this country included some of the wealthiest people in the land, and surely they might be expected out of their wealth to provide church accommodation for those Marines who held the same religious belief as themselves. He asked the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it would not be possible to postpone this Vote and refer the whole question to those highly placed in the Church of England, both ecclesiastics and laymen. He was perfectly certain that there would be found sufficient independence in that Church to supply the £12,000 wanted for this building, and so obviate the necessity of coming to the House and asking Catholics and Nonconformists to vote money for a church in which they did not believe. He had not a single thought against the Church of England, but he claimed that there was a principle involved in this case; and he knew that there would be a feeling of indignation against this Vote amongst the 12,000,000 Catholics scattered throughout the Empire, and also amongst the Nonconformists.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE said he entirely agreed that it was a very unfortunate thing that on this Vote they should have to discuss the question of various forms of religion. He did not think that hon. Members could be aware of the fact that it had been the practice of the Admiralty for many years past to grant financial assistance to all recognised denominations which served the religious needs of men in the naval service. He was himself engaged this moment in negotiations for the purchase of a site at Portland for a Roman Catholic Church for the men at that station; but it was practically an impossibility for the Admiralty to construct churches proportioned to the exact number of individuals belonging to the various denominations. He hoped the Committee would accept that explanation, or take a division, for it would be most unfortunate if the debate developed into a religious controversy which could serve no good purpose.

Mr. WILLIAM McARTHUR (Cornwall, St. Austell) said that he had heard with great satisfaction that it was the intention of the Admiralty to make no distinction whatever in the treatment of religious denominations. Would the Secretary to the Admiralty say on behalf of the Admiralty that so far as contributions towards church buildings were concerned, these should be in proportion to the number of worshippers, whether members of the Church of England, Nonconformists, or Catholics? If he was told that the Admiralty intended to treat the members of the Nonconformist bodies in exactly the same way as the members of the Church of England then his objection to this particular Vote would largely disappear.

Mr. PRETYMAN said it would be practically impossible to partition the grant available for religious purposes in exact proportion amongst the denominations, and it could not be expected. But the Admiralty did desire to apply the principle of absolute equality in every case where application was made for assistance, whether towards the church structure, or the spiritual needs of the men in the Navy or the Marines.

Mr. BLACK (Banffshire) asked the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether this church was to be vested in the State, or in the hands of the Church of England? If in the latter case, the use of the church would be denied to any other denomination.

This question had arisen in India, and had caused a great deal of feeling in Scotland. He supported the Amendment, and he hoped his hon. friend would press it to the division.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he was aware that small Votes had been given towards the promotion of religious services to the men who did not belong to the Church of England; but he did not think it could be shown by the Secretary to the Admiralty that so large a sum of money as £10,000 or £12,000 had been voted by the House of Commons for the building of any church except those belonging to the Church of England. Would the hon. Gentleman give an undertaking that, if an application was made, a Catholic church would be built out of public money in any district where at present the accommodation was insufficient? If the hon. Gentleman did so that would be satisfactory so far as he was concerned.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES said that he was a Nonconformist, and the position of Nonconformists in regard to this matter had not been truly stated. They did not believe in State churches, and the vast majority of them would not accept a penny from the State for their churches. Nonconformists did not believe in State endowments, and they objected to the State giving a single penny to any religious body.

MR. ALFRED HUTTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Morley) said that, notwithstanding the assurance of the hon. Gentleman, all denominations had not been treated exactly alike. He reminded the hon. Gentleman that only this year, for the first time, had two large denominations, the Baptists and the Congregationalists, been allowed special ministers, and the men belonging to these denominations been permitted to go to their own churches. There was in Yorkshire a very large secondary school under the Endowed Schools Act. Recently a gentleman named Mr. Morrison built a church there, at a cost of £30,000, and though he was a member of the Church of England he stipulated that the church should not be consecrated, but only dedicated, and the bishop of the diocese had to accept these terms. The consequence was that the bishop was unable to prohibit any Nonconformist minister from preaching in that church. Could not the Government see their way to follow that example? At any rate, when money was provided out of the State funds for a church building, it was only reasonable that it should be available for religious services among the Marines belonging to different denominations.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said that this was a very serious question, and ought not to be treated with any kind of levity. There were thousands of Marines in this particular place, and these men belonged to different religious denominations, or they would not be like the rest of the community. He did not object to due provision being made for members of the Established Church; but what he wanted to know was whether, if there were no other churches for Marines who were Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, or Congregationalists within a reasonable distance, were the men compelled to attend the Established Church? [Cries of "No."] Then was it not a fact that in garrison towns there were more kinds of religious service than one in military chapels? He happened to be in one a fortnight ago, where there was a Church of England service in the morning, a Catholic service later in the day, and a Methodist service in the evening. All these classes were duly provided for on a footing of perfect equality. What he wanted to know was whether this church, for which they were asked to pay £11,000, was to be used in the way he had described, or exclusively for Church of England services? If it was to be used for all parties he should vote for the grant, but if for one party alone he would vote against it.

SIR JOSEPH LEESE said that the root, the foundation, of Nonconformity was that they should conduct their religious services for themselves. What he wanted to know was whether the pulpit of this church would be open, say, to a Presbyterian chaplain?

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that the policy which the Admiralty had adopted in the past had been that when claims or requests were made to them for financial assistance on account of the fact that sufficient church accommodation was not provided for the men under the jurisdiction of the Admiralty, those requests were, as far as possible, met by proportionate grants out of the Admiralty fund. As far as possible equality was preserved, and the object of the Admiralty was to treat all denominations on a footing of equality. With regard to the question put by the hon. Member for East Clare, he did not positively recall that in any Naval Vote in past years money had been taken for the purpose of erecting a Roman Catholic church. Quite recently, however, the Admiralty had arranged to provide a site for a Roman Catholic church at Portland, in consideration of the considerable number of Catholics in the Home Fleet. In other cases where there were small bodies of men who had received ministrations from the local Catholic priests, when applications were received for financial assistance they were met by grants from the Admiralty fund.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL asked if the building proposed to be erected was to be used exclusively for the purposes of the Church of England?

*MR. AINSWORTH (Argyll) said this Vote was for the purpose of carrying out certain improvements at Marine barracks, and it was only fair that every one of those items should be treated on exactly the same lines. The items were for swimming-baths, reading-rooms, and churches, which he took it were intended to promote the intellectual, physical, and moral welfare of the garrison. The swimming-baths and reading-rooms were for the use of the whole garrison, and he wished to know if the churches to be built would remain the property of the Admiralty and be used for the benefit of the whole of the members of the garrison, whatever their religious opinions might be. It was not right to devote a building intended for the religious improvement of the whole garrison to any particular sect.

MR. WILLIAM McARTHUR asked whether Roman Catholics and Nonconformists got the same proportion as the Church of England. If not, they were not putting all the denominations on a footing of equality. If the Nonconformists and the Catholics, for instance, did not get their fair proportion of the money spent, what became of the argument put forward by the hon. Member that all bodies were treated upon a footing of absolute equality. If the Nonconformist and Catholic sailors and Marines did not get the same proportion according to their numbers as the sailors and Marines belonging to the Church of England, he submitted that they were not putting all denominations on a footing of equality. He had always been of opinion that although the Admiralty were inclined to make reasonable provisions for the various religious denominations, he had never gathered that they had ever put Roman Catholics and Nonconformists on the same footing as the members of the Church of England.

*MR. PRETYMAN explained that the question of capitation grants did not arise on this Vote. As, however, the hon. Member had referred to the question, he might explain that capitation grants were given to the ministers of all denominations whenever ministrations were performed to the men belonging to the Fleet, and they were granted upon a footing of absolute equality. As, however, naval chaplains were borne in so many ships of the Fleet, it followed, of course, that the necessity for capitation grants was not frequent in the case of the Established Church.

MR. WILLIAM McARTHUR said what they were now considering was whether the same proportion of the money granted was spent upon the Catholic and Nonconformist sailors and Marines as was spent upon the sailors and Marines belonging to the Established Church.

MR. WHITTAKER (Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley) said they had not been told whether this building when erected would be placed entirely in the hands of the Church of England or whether it would be available for the use of all denominations. There were cases where the Church of England had accepted those conditions, and, as the Admiralty had to find the money, they could insist upon those conditions if they liked. The Church of England would accept those conditions if the Admiralty insisted upon them. He wished to know definitely whether this building would be available for all denominations or not, and he should like a definite answer to that question.

Mr. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe) asked if the land had already been bought for this church at Deal? If so, when the money was spent would the church remain the property of the nation or would it be handed over to somebody else? If the church was consecrated it would not belong to the nation except in the sense in which the State Church at present belonged to the nation. As a matter of business he thought they ought to have more particulars as to whether accommodation could not be found for the Marines in the existing churches at Deal. If the churches at Deal were so full that no services could be arranged during any portion of the day, he thought before this money was voted the Admiralty should satisfy the Committee that there was no available accommodation at present, and that there was real occasion for the spending of this money. The question whether the churches when built would be available for the services of all denominations was a very important one.

Mr. LOUGH thought it was a very reasonable request that those churches should be available for all denominations. He knew that in Deal there was plenty of church and chapel accommodation for Marines of all denominations; and therefore he thought it was extravagant, in these times of depression, to vote £11,000 for a church. They could get out of this difficulty by not building a church at all, and then they would save the money. He suggested, as a compromise, that they should spend half the amount, namely, £1,000 for this purpose. The £1,000 for the church at Deal was the first item, and if it was withdrawn there would be no church built. Therefore he suggested that the hon. Member should withdraw this proposal to build a church at Deal altogether.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.) said he wished to press the point of economy in this matter. The proposal was to provide church buildings for about 1,000 Marines at Eastney and Deal. He felt sure sufficient provision could be made for the men near Eastney, where there were three churches already, one with accommodation for 600 sittings, another with 630 sittings, and a third with 473 sittings. He was confident that provision could be made at those churches, and, on the ground of economy, he objected to spending this £2,000. Until they were told definitely that those churches would not have these Marines, or that there was not room for them, he should be compelled to vote against this proposal purely on the ground of economy.

*__Mr. ARTHUR LEE__ said that Eastney was a considerable distance from Portsmouth, and it was incorrect to say that many churches were immediately at hand.

Surely for a great service like the British Navy this country could afford to provide proper accommodation for the religious services of the men at the great marine depôts such as Eastney and Deal. Moreover, these churches became shrines, where the memorials of officers and men, who died in the service of their country, were put, so that they became centres of national feeling. As to the specific question which had been put, no Admiralty churches, as far as he knew, were ever consecrated. There was no question of land to be transferred; the land was in the precincts of the barracks. The question whether other denominations should be permitted to use these buildings was one worthy of consideration, and he understood it had been done in the case of the Army at Aldershot. No application had ever been received as regarded the naval service, but if applications were made by other denominations for the use of these buildings he did not think they would receive unsympathetic consideration at the hands of the Admiralty. If hon. Members interested cared to get the various denominations to make requests they would be sympathetically considered by the Admiralty authorities. He did not think anything more could be usefully said by him upon this subject, and he hoped the Committee would now come to a decision upon this point.

MR. LABOUCHERE said the hon. Gentleman had started an entirely new defence, for he had told them that these churches were intended to become the shrines where the memorials of officers and men were put. That was not the object of these buildings at all. Considering the vast amount of money they were spending upon the Navy this year he did not think they should be called upon to spend an additional amount upon churches. The hon. Gentleman had told them that the suggestion that these two churches should be used by dissenting bodies as well as the Church of England would be considered, but they all knew what was meant when a Government Department said anything would be considered. What they wanted was a pledge from the hon. Gentleman that if these two churches were built out of public money, not only Church of England services, but the services of other religious denominations should be permitted on application. He was surprised at the compromise suggested by the hon. Member for West Islington, and he was afraid that his hon. friend's principles were weakening. He had suggested that they should vote half this money, but he objected to yielding anything upon a question of principle. They were taking this course not merely to save £1,000, but to elevate themselves upon the pinnacle of principle, and his hon. friend the Member for Islington was only prepared to go half-way up the pinnacle. He protested against the marines being obliged to go to church. It was contrary to the most elementary principles of religious equality and the right of conscience to oblige anyone, because he was a paid servant of the State, to go to a place of worship.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth) said that as the Member representing Eastney perhaps the Committee would permit him to say a word or two. He wished to protest against any interference with the church at Eastney for the marines. They might as well take away the chapel from Wellington Barracks as remove the church at Eastney. Any proposal of the kind would be strongly resented by the men quartered there, for it would be an outrage upon their feelings. The hon. Member for North Camberwell was quite wrong with regard to the accommodation at Eastney, and if the hon. Member would come and stay with him at Portsmouth he would take him to church on Sunday at Eastney, and when he had been there he felt sure he would make quite a different speech.

MR. RUNCIMAN said he moved this reduction because he believed it to be an extravagant Vote, and because he objected to any public money being granted for the use of any particular denomination. The Civil Lord had told them that any applications from Nonconformist bodies would be favourably considered by the Admiralty, but they would remind the hon. Gentleman that that was the form used by Members of Parliament when they received resolutions from their constituencies with which they did not agree. He asked the Civil Lord whether he would give a pledge that the church at Deal would be available for the use of other denominations beside the Church of England?

* MR. ARTHUR LEE said he did not think he could go beyond the promise he had already made that any application from other denominations would be carefully considered at the Admiralty.

MR. RUNCIMAN said that, in the absence of a definite pledge, he must press his Motion.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 109; Noes, 171. (Division List No. 40.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth, C. B.
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Doughty, George
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Farrell, James Patrick
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Helme, Norval Watson
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W,)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spear, John Ward

Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J.T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Runciman and Mr. Black.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.Hugh O
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt.Hn. A. J. (Manch'r.
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Worc
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.)
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hope, J. F (Sheffield, Brightside)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John G. (Yorks., N. R.
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriessh.
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridg
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollcston, Sir John F. L.
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seely Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E (Taunton
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood, and Mr· Ailwyn Fellowes.

Original Question again proposed:—

Mr. PRETYMAN rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 173; Noes, 109. (Division List No. 41.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt Hn. Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S.W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Heath, James (Staffords. N.W.
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N.R
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Maxwell, W J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G.
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Moore, William
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt. Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (Stalybridge
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, E.)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C.

Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Farrell, James Patrick
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Helme, Norval Watson
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jones William (Carnarvonshire)
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary, Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Pirie, Duncan, V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soares, Ernest J.
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Whitley and Mr. Black.

Question put accordingly, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,634,200, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other Charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 184; Noes, 85. (Division List No. 42.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allen, Charles P.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth, R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bentinck, Lord Henry, C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon, Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Elibank, Master of
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannateny
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Harmsworth, R. Leicester

Harris, F. Leverton(Tynem'th)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hope,J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hozier, Hon.James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.(Salop.
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson,John Grant(Yorks.N.R
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee,ArthurH.(Hants.,Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Rt. Hn.Walter(Bristol,S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas,ReginaldJ.(Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Maconochie, A. W.
M‘Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M‘Calmont, Colonel James
M‘Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Maxwell, W.J.H. (Dumfriessh.
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir FrederickG.
Malvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur, H. Aylmer
Murray, RtHn.A.Graham(Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parkes, Ebenezer
Partington, Oswald
Peel,Hn.Wm.Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederick Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hon. M.W.(Stalybridge
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos.Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marleybone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seely,Maj. J.E.B.(Isle of Wight
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford,East)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G(Oxf'dUniv.
Thomas,David Alfred (Merthyr
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col, William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E(Taunton
Whiteley,H.(Ashton und.Lyne
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Woodhouse,SirJ.T.(Hudd'rsf'd
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William, (Cork, N.E.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Ambrose, Robert
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dobbie, Joseph
Doogan, P. C.
Emmott, Alfred
Farrell, James Patrick
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Hayden, John Patrick
Helme, Norval Watson
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M‘Hugh, Patrick A.
M‘Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary,Mid
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly,James(Roscommon,N.
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

And, it being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

Adjourned at eighteen minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 4th March 1904

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—Site for Duke of York's School [H.L.]. The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

Marylebone Chapels (St. James, Westmoreland Street)—(Petition for Bill). Examiners' Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]. A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Victoria University of Yorkshire Bill [H.L.]; Victoria University of Manchester Bill [H.L.]. Reports from His Majesty's Attorney-General received, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Manchester Ship Canal (Finance) Bill [H.L.]. The Lord Balfour informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The order made on the 22nd of February last, discharged, and Bill committed.

St. Mary Woolnoth Bill [H.L]. Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Liverpool and Wigan Churches Bill [H.L.]; Victoria University of Yorkshire Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Victoria University of Manchester Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

WAR OFFICE.

Report of the War Office (Re-constitution) Committee: Parts I. and II.

QUEEN ANNE'S BOUNTY.

Annual Report and Accounts of the Governors for the year ended 31st December, 1903.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

BANKRUPTCY COURTS (IRELAND).

Returns of the Official Assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland, and the local courts, Belfast and Cork, for the year 1903. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILL.

ALLOTMENTS (LONDON) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to facilitate the provision of allotments by the London County Council. Was presented by the Earl Carrington; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No 20.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: My Lords, I ask leave to put off for another week the Motion standing in my name on the Order Paper for Monday next, asking that an humble Address be presented to His Majesty praying him to appoint a small Commission to inquire into, and report upon, the present state and prospects of our trade, and whether any change of methods or other action is needed in furtherance thereof. This is the third time I have put off this Motion, and I will explain why. The first time I postponed it because it was down for the same day as the Guildhall meeting at which the Duke of Devonshire was to speak. I was asked to put it off a second time because it was said that it would interfere with the fiscal debate then about to take place in your Lordships' House. I postponed it for a further fortnight, and this morning I received a letter strongly advising me, in the interests of the Motion, that I should put it off for yet another week. I accordingly take the liberty of doing so.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

CHINESE LABOUR FOR THE TRANSVAAL.

*LORD STANMORE rose to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies in what manner it is proposed to carry into effect the introduction of the wives and families of Chinese immigrants in the Transvaal, as promised by His Majesty's Government; and to move for copies of the Ordinances with respect to immigrants now in force in the Island of Trinidad. He said: My Lords, the notice which I have put upon the Paper consists of two parts—a question and a Motion, and I propose to take them separately. Before putting my Question to the noble Duke who represents the Colonial Office in this House, I must, in the first instance, tender my hearty acknowledgments to His Majesty's Government for the ample confirmation which they have afforded of the opinion which my noble friend Lord Ripon and myself ventured to express a few nights ago — namely, that this Ordinance, by which it is sought to import Chinese labourers into South Africa, is unprecedented and unique. Similar opinions to those expressed by myself and my noble friend have been given expression to in another place. And with what result? With the result that His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies pledged himself to effect certain changes in, and additions to, that Ordinance, every one of which pledges was in itself an admission that the Ordinance was unlike other Ordinances of a similar character. No doubt those pledges when redeemed, as I have no doubt they will be, and those alterations, when made, will go far to improve the provisions of the Ordinance. They will still leave much of defect and much to desire in the way of addition; but they will be, so far as they go, improvements, and the object of my Question this evening is to ask in what manner it is intended that those modifications should be effected and the pledges of His Majesty's Government carried out?

I apprehend, from all that we have seen and heard, that it is intended principally to carry out those emendations by way of what are called regulations. Now, regulations under an Ordinance are exceedingly useful things, and they can do a great deal, but they cannot do everything, and I am anxious to know whether it is intended in all cases, and especially in that case which relates to perhaps the most difficult question which the Ordinance touches—the introduction and repatriation of female immigrants—whether it is intended to rely exclusively upon regulations, or whether it is proposed also to have resort to amendments in the Ordinance before it is sanctioned or to an amending Ordinance to be passed subsequently. Regulations, as I have said, can do a great deal. Several of the pledges which His Majesty's Government have given can, I think, be redeemed by regulations, but on two, and, perhaps, three, subjects I confess that I entertain some doubts whether they can do so. The relation of a regulation under an Ordinance to the Ordinance under which it is made, bears a considerable analogy to that of an Order in Council to an Act of Parliament. As your Lordships are aware, an Order in Council can enjoin a great deal, but it must not contravene and cannot repeal any provision of an Act of Parliament. If it does so, or attempts to do so, that provision is *ipso facto* null and void, and it is the same with a regulation. A regulation cannot be contrary to the expressed words and intention of the Ordinance under which it is framed. It is only this morning that we have had placed in our hands some additional Papers with regard to these transactions—Papers of great importance and in some respects of a surprising character. We have a pledge from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, among others, that no labourer shall, under this Ordinance, be transferred from one employer to another without his own consent, and I am glad to perceive from these Papers that the Secretary of State has persisted in stating that his pledge must be kept, and that that provision must be enacted notwithstanding the remonstrances which have been made to him from the Transvaal.

But observe what the provision of the Ordinance is. We now see, having got the debates and the whole of the proceedings before us, that, as that clause originally stood, the labourer was not to be transferred without his own consent, and that that provision requiring his consent was deliberately omitted from the Ordinance for the express purpose of enacting that he might be transferred without his consent, to insist on which was said to be "inconvenient." Now, there is a distinct statutable provision of an Ordinance. An Amendment was moved and carried, and words were omitted for a distinct purpose; for the purpose of providing that the labourer should be transferred without his own consent. I do not see how it is possible for a regulation under the Ordinance to contravene and upset this distinct provision of the Ordinance deliberately made. Then, with regard to the clause about the importation of women. There the contradiction is, perhaps, not quite so evident, but at the same time it seems to me open to very grave doubt whether a regulation such as that which the Secretary of State for the Colonies has pledged himself to enforce, would not be in direct contradiction of the literal wording of the Ordinance. The wording of the Ordinance provides that no wife or member of the family of an immigrant shall enter the colony except under certain limited conditions—except under the condition that she is imported by a licensed importer, at his expense, and is put to work of a similar character to that to which the male immigrants are subjected, whatever that may be. But that is wholly permissive. There are three "ifs" in the matter—a woman may be admitted, if the husband asks for her; if she is willing to go; and if the importer is willing to pay the expense of her introduction. But suppose none of them are willing? There can be no compulsion. And I do not see how you can convert a clause, which makes it permissive for an importer of labour to introduce women, into an obligation. I do not see how you can convert "may" into "must" by a regulation; and I have some doubts whether it would be within the ordinary functions of a regulation to impose any such heavy expenditure as is necessarily involved in compulsory introduction of women by the importers. You change the character of that clause; you do not repeal it, but you contravene it; and I doubt whether that can be done by a regulation. It is possible it may be so, but it is at least open to considerable doubt, because, as I say, it changes the character of the provision. Unless is you have compulsion of some kind it comparatively useless. In all other Immigration Ordinances that I am acquainted with, where the introduction of females is required, a certain proportion of women must accompany a certain number of men. That is perfectly intelligible.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: What proportion?

*LORD STANMORE: My noble friend asks me what proportion. It varies a good deal in different colonies; sometimes the proportion is one half, sometimes one-third, and in one case I know it is two-thirds. In this Ordinance, by the way, even supposing that a regulation or an amending Ordinance is passed making it compulsory that when a Chinaman wishes his wife to accompany him she must be brought over, I do not know how you are to force the wife to go with her husband if she does not choose to do so. The whole clause as it now stands is permissive. That is a point in which I hold the clause to be exceedingly defective. It will be greatly improved by the fulfilment of the Secretary of State's pledge that whenever an immigrant wishes that his wife should accompany or follow him it shall be done; but still it will be left an option to the immigrant and will not ensure that there shall be a certain equality between the male and female elements of the immigrant population. I want to know whether it is intended in all cases to trust to regulations, or to introduce an amending Ordinance, or to suspend the assent to this Ordinance until it is amended, or until it has been well considered whether regulations can indeed effect all the objects which it has been stated His Majesty's Government propose to effect. Those are my Questions.

The Motion I have made is for copies of the Ordinances with respect to immigrants now in force in the Island of Trinidad. The reason why I make that

Motion is this, that, evidently in the most perfect good faith, it has been asserted, both in this House and in the other House of Parliament, that in the Island of Trinidad provisions exist restricting the residence of the immigrants to the premises of their employer in the same manner that it is restricted in this South African Ordinance. I am sure, as I have said, that that assertion is made in the most perfect good faith, and I can only account for its being made for one of two reasons—either that by some recent Ordinance, which is unknown to me, some such provision has been introduced into the laws of Trinidad—and if that is the case it is a very grave matter, and one which I shall touch upon later—or that noble Lords and others who hold that opinion have misconstrued some of the articles of the Ordinances in force; and I can quite conceive, if hastily looked at, how they might seem to bear that interpretation.

It is perfectly true that in the Ordinances which have been in force in Trinidad for the last half century there is a provision which renders absence punishable. There is a section in the Ordinance headed "Illegal Absence"; and absence of the labourer is a punishable offence. But absence from what, my Lords? Is it absence from the premises of the employer? No. Is it absence even from the estate of the employer? No, it is not; and, even if it were, confinement to an estate of some thousand acres in extent is a very different thing from confinement within the four walls of a mine compound. It is absence from work that is punishable, and to understand what is meant by absence from work you must look at other clauses of the Ordinance and see what work means. It is defined as work for nine hours in each day. That work usually began in the morning between five and six o'clock, and after the nine hours were finished, the labourer, though he was an indentured labourer, was a free man until the next day's labour began. He could go where he liked and do what he liked so long as he appeared again at work on the following morning when his services were required. The police had large powers of arrest, but supposing a man who had done his nine hours work was arrested that afternoon and brought before the magistrate (which was all that the police could do), and charged with illegal absence from work, he would immediately say, "I have performed my work. I have done my nine hours work and am free." And the magistrate could do nothing to him. The magistrate could do nothing to him unless he had been absent from legal work during part of the day; and desertion, which was another offence, did not begin unless he had been seven days absent. Therefore, unless it has been recently changed, the provision in Trinidad with regard to illegal absence is a very different thing indeed from the provision in the Ordinance we have under consideration.

When I was in Trinidad I lived in the immediate vicinity of a large sugar estate; the estate barracks, which, by the way, stood near the side of the road, were within easy view of my gate. I used to see, afternoon after afternoon, when the work was done, those labourers turn out. They went about into the markets and into the towns and did as they liked. The afternoon was a free time; but it may be, as I say, that some recent measure has altered the law which had been so long enforced. That law about absence from work was no fad of mine; it was not introduced by me. It was the law many years before I went to Trinidad: it was certainly the law for many years after I left Trinidad, and, so far as I know, it is the law still. If it has been altered it would raise suspicion that the Colonial Office of the present day is not quite so keen in watching after the interests of immigrant labourers as in former days it used to be. I have some reason to fear that in some slight degree that may be the case, for in recent years, in Trinidad, some of the safeguards which we used to think were most important safeguards for the welfare of the immigrants, have undoubtedly been abolished and repealed. There was a law—and it was a highly protective law—which rendered it impossible to allot immigrants, newly arrived, to an estate on which the mortality had in the previous year exceeded certain proportions. That has been repealed. There was another which rendered it impossible to allot new immigrants to an estate on which the wages earned in the previous year were a certain percentage below the wages earned on other estates in the same district. That, too, has been repealed. Some powers of interference on the part of the Governor with regard to allotment of immigrants have also, I understand, been repealed, and it therefore may be possible that other changes have taken place. But I should be sorry to think so, because it would imply that there was a less keen sensitiveness to the dangers and the risks which attend all these imigration laws, for even the best of them have to be administered with great care and infinite watchfulness.

There is a third case in which I have some doubt whether regulations would meet the evident intentions of His Majesty's Government. The Ordinance as it originally stood, we learn by the Papers now submitted to us, contained a definition of what the "premises" should be, and with that definition I am not altogether disposed to quarrel. The premises were defined as the premises of the proprietor and a radius of one mile around them. That gave the immigrant a mile in which to disport himself after his work was done, and resembled provisions in the Jamaica Law, where there was a five mile radius, and in the Guiana Law, where there was a two mile radius. But that mile radius was dropped out in the passage of the Bill through the Legislative Council of the Transvaal, and it was omitted with the express intention, as declared by the mover, of confining the labourers to the strict premises of the employer, or, as they choose to call him, the "importer," as if he were importing a lot of pigs or bales of cotton. This provision was, with the distinct understanding and assent of the Legislative Council, altered in order to secure the close confinement of the labourers to the premises of their employers, though one member of the Legislative Council, I see, had the humanity to observe that those premises were sometimes very confined. He instanced one mine—I think he called it the Grand Jubilee Mine—the compound of which was only 300 or 400 yards long, and he thought that would be a very confined space in which to keep the labourers. I entirely agree with him there. This clause of the Ordinance was deliberately passed to effect the confinement of these men to the premises of the employer; it was passed with that object, certain words being left out in order to make it so operate. Can you by a regulation set that aside and practically contravene it? I consider that to be open at least to doubt.

I do not intend to press my Motion if the noble Duke is able to give me some satisfactory explanation as to what the laws at present in force are; but, looking at the whole matter, I see no reason to change the opinion I previously expressed with regard to this particular Ordinance. It is quite true that I have not read the 150 Ordinances which the Secretary of State for the Colonies said had been passed with regard to immigration. The Secretary of State, with that candour which everybody knows he possesses, at once admitted that of those 150 Ordinances by far the greater proportion were wholly unimportant and mere amending Ordinances which no one would care to read. I have passed many such in my own time—Ordinances which substituted the word "April" for "March," and which substituted the figure "10" for "5"—Ordinances which did not count. But I have read all the important Ordinances with regard to immigration, and I repeat that this Ordinance, both in what it omits and in what it contains, differs not only in degree but in kind and in principle from any other that I have ever perused. I say from any other that I have ever perused but there was one other which did go, to a certain extent, in the same direction. In the Island of Mauritius an Ordinance was passed which made something of the same attempt which is made here, to force the immigrants to stick to one pursuit only, and to debar them from all others. It was attempted to secure that they should only engage in agricultural employment and should not serve in warehouses or shops, whereupon the Governor of the day was peremptorily ordered by the Secretary of State at that time to take care that no similar provision was inserted in any future Ordinance, and to disallow the Ordinance so passed. That is the only precedent I can find for some of the provisions of this Ordinance.

One feature that is most remarkable is the manner in which large and important provisions are left wholly to the regulations. It has generally been the doctrine of the Colonial Office—it was so during the whole reign of Her late Majesty, from the time when the original Order in Council was passed in 1838, which is the foundation and root of all these laws, and which contains the principles by which they all are more or less guided—that regulations were things to be dealt with very carefully, that they ought to be confined to details intended merely to carry out the provisions which were duly and strictly enacted in the body of the Ordinance and not to constitute new provisions themselves. But I find here that whole classes of questions seem to be thrown on the regulations without anything about them appearing in the Ordinance. Is there any other Immigration Ordinance in the whole of the British Empire in which there is not one single word from beginning to end as to the rate of wages? Nothing is said in this Ordinance on that cardinal point; nothing is said with regard to the duration of labour. In most Ordinances it is stated what holidays there are. Nothing is said here about holidays. Is Sunday to be a holiday? Nothing is said either about payment of wages, the duration of work, or about many of those subjects which generally form part of the law.

The spirit of the instructions of every Secretary of State during the last half century has been that legislation with regard to immigration should be legislation which should be directed, not only towards supplying labour for the employer, but should be for the benefit and for the raising of the social *status* of the immigrant himself.

This Ordinance is evidently the result of two different feelings. There is the feeling, on the one hand, that Oriental labour must be had to supply the shortage of labour in the country, and therefore they ask for Chinese labour. There is also a feeling that they do not want to have Chinamen in the country, and therefore they try to pretend to keep him out while they let him in. He is to be let in for one purpose only, and is to be kept out of sight and out of mind while they still try to preserve, as far as possible, the policy of exclusion. I believe that to be impossible. I believe it to be as impossible as it certainly is unjust. A distinguished Secretary of State—the late Lord Grey, one of those who approached the subject in a more philosophical spirit than probably most other statesmen have approached it, wrote thus years ago—

> "All experience tends to prove that no legal regulations, however severe, if they stop short of the extreme compulsion which is the characteristic of slavery, can succeed in enforcing really efficient labour, even though it may be in fulfilment of a voluntary obligation, from men who have no interest in being industrious."

What interest do you give these people to be industrious? You introduce provisions, the like of which are certainly not to be found in any other law of a similar character. You put into a schedule a whole list—a long and extraordinary list—of things which these men are not to be. The schedule enumerates the positions these men are not to fill. They are not to be signalmen, plasterers, signallers, drill-sharpeners, skipmen, stonecutters, timbermen, wire-splicers, and a great many other things—indeed, they are not allowed any chance whatever of rising. All that they are allowed is the wages that they will receive in the lowest class of labour.

We are told that the contract will be fully explained to them in China, and that by that contract they will stand. Well, I have some doubt about that. Such proper previous explanation is one of the most difficult things to make sure of, and I cannot but consider that the Ordinance, admitted, as it is, to be faulty by the confession of His Majesty's Government in pledging themselves to amend it, ought not in its present condition to receive His Majesty's assent. I say that reluctantly and unwillingly, because I am no depreciator of the benefits which would result from a well-ordered immigration of Eastern labourers into colonies where their industry is needed. I have long been an earnest advocate of that, and I have never in the least yielded to those who want to make out that in the West Indies, in Mauritius, in Ceylon, and in the Pacific the system is only one of disguised slavery. It is nothing of the kind. It is a system under which the immigrant has great opportunities of bettering himself, of rising in the world, of obtaining money and property, and of altogether improving his social *status*. But there is no such prospect open to the immigrant under this Ordinance. If you do wish for his presence, if you are compelled to desire his presence, I hold that you must also do something for his benefit.

My opinion, hostile to this Ordinance, is given reluctantly and is given as that of one who is not opposed to immigration. I may, perhaps, add that it is the opinion of one who is not altogether unacquainted with the administration of the immigration laws, for I have had to administer laws relating to immigration in four different and widely-separate colonies, and for a period of about eighteen years. I should be, indeed, hopelessly incapable if I had not learned something about them in that time; and I may therefore observe, after that experience, that these immigration laws, good as they are in their results and in themselves, all require the most careful watching. There was not one of them in any one of the colonies of which I have spoken which could have been left to work itself. There was constantly something required attention, and which, if not attended to, would have led to abuse. I will mention three of the most difficult things to deal with: first, abuses in the recruiting. That is a matter which, under the best system and with the utmost care, is almost always full of defects and abuses. You cannot overlook all your native recruiters. You cannot tell what they say, and you do not know what inducements they offer; and when the recruit is brought away from his home down to your depôt where you question him, he has already parted with his freedom; he is a long way off from his home, is probably under obligations to the recruiter who has advanced him money, and it would be very difficult indeed for him at that period to draw back. Then you explain to him the contract, and I daresay you do so fairly; but it is very difficult to be sure that it is fully explained so as to ensure its true meaning being recognised.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies observed in another place that the wages to be paid to Chinese labourers in South Africa would be six or seven times more than they get in China. That will be explained to them, I have no doubt. Will it also be explained to them that the price of the necessaries of life is six or seven times greater in South Africa than in China? Of that I have my doubts. Well, that is one great abuse, and there is nothing whatever in this Ordinance to check it. Another thing most difficult to check under the best system is pressure to re-engage. In this Ordinance the immigrant is permitted, at the end of his period of indenture, to re-engage for a similar term of years. It has always been found exceedingly difficult to prevent an illegitimate pressure being put upon the immigrant, towards the close of the term of his service, to re-engage. With the best will in the world, and the best clauses that can be framed in an Ordinance, it has been found almost impossible to prevent the illegitimate influence which can be easily exercised by an employer who is desirous that a man should re-engage, and I think the conditions under which these labourers will be working in South Africa will make it far easier for the employer to press, and far more difficult for the labourers to refuse, the request to re-engage. For that there is no provision in the Ordinance. The third difficulty which has always been experienced in the administration of immigration laws is with regard to the regular payment of wages. They have been apt to fall into arrear, and it has been found very difficult to make provisions to insure their regular payment. In this Ordinance there is not a word about the payments, when they are to be made and how often. In the West Indies they were made every fortnight. How often are they to be made here? There is no provision whatever in the Ordinance with regard to that.

It seems to me that, great as are the advantages of immigration, properly managed, great as are the mutual advantages to immigrant and to employer, yet it can only be advantageous when it is carried out on a true principle. That true principle is that you cannot possibly ignore the introduction of this foreign labour; there it is, and there it will be, and the introduction of the female and family element makes it infinitely more difficult to deal with.

You will have immigrants with their wives and families, and you will have to make a choice; you will either have to give them far more freedom than you give them under this Ordinance, or you will be tempted, as Lord Grey said in the extract which I have already quoted, to come nearer and nearer to that state of slavery which he refers to, in order to obtain by force what you cannot get by fair means. Therefore, although it is with great reluctance that I come to the conclusion, I am bound to say that, while I am in no way unwilling to see immigration from the East taking place to South Africa, and immigrant workmen employed in the mines there under fair conditions, yet if their presence is only to be bought at the price of the passage of an Ordinance such as this, then I say it is better to do without them.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for copies of the Ordinances with respect to immigrants now in force in the Island of Trinidad."—(*The Lord Stanmore.*)

*The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (The Duke of Marlborough): My Lords, no one in this House is more qualified to discuss the value of Ordinances with regard to the immigration of either coolies or Asiatics than the noble Lord who has just sat down. The noble Lord has been the representative of the Crown in many different colonies. He has served in Trinidad, in Mauritius, in Fiji, in New Zealand, and in Ceylon, and I do not think there is any Member of your Lordships' House possessing a greater knowledge of the value and importance of these Ordinances than the noble Lord who initiated this discussion. When this matter was raised about a fortnight ago I inflicted a rather lengthy speech upon your Lordships, and I feel that you would not wish me to repeat a similar operation to-day; therefore my answer to the noble Lord will be somewhat brief. I owe a debt of gratitude to my noble friend for kindly postponing the discussion on this question from last Tuesday until to-day, and I think the adjournment has been of some value, because it has permitted us to place before your Lordships fresh Papers dealing with this subject—Papers which the noble Lord himself admitted threw fresh light on the matter and added distinctly to the value of the discussion. I was pleased to hear the noble Lord, in the commencement of his remarks, admit that the pledges which the Secretary of State for the Colonies had given in another place would undoubtedly improve the Ordinance.

There were many matters raised by the noble Lord upon which he desires information. Let me deal first with the question of the number of wives who are to accompany the Chinese labourers to South Africa. The noble Lord seemed to think that a certain percentage of the wives of the Asiatics should accompany their husbands; but it is impossible to be certain that you will get the services of married men. The Secretary of State has distinctly said that we should permit every married Chinaman who desired to do so, to take his wife with him to South Africa. Indeed he went further and said he would welcome every effort to secure that those Chinamen who are recruited in China should be accompanied by their wives and families. But it is impossible to insist that a certain percentage of wives shall accompany the Chinamen, because we do not know what percentage of married men we shall recruit. If a hard and fast rule was made on this point it might tend to limit the facilities which we desire to give to every Chinaman to take his wife with him. I do not know the habits of the Chinaman well, but I am told that very often, when he takes his first voyage, he prefers to leave his wife at home, and after he has satisfied himself that his new occupation is both a remunerative one, and one which gives him satisfaction, he then decides to ask his wife to join him. Therefore, if in the first batch of immigrants all the wives do not accompany their husbands, it does not follow that at a subsequent date they will not do so. I think the noble Earl suggested that we should make it compulsory for the wife to accompany her husband.

Lord STANMORE: Compulsory that there should be a certain number of females accompanying a certain number of male immigrants.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I am afraid I am not prepared to recommend a course of action which seems to be quite unprecedented and somewhat irregular.

LORD STANMORE: It is the case in other immigration laws.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: The noble Lord went on to discuss the question of wages that the Chinamen are to receive. It is true that there is no definite statement in the Papers before your Lordships as to the amount of the wages to be paid. That is still a matter which has not been decided. No doubt it will form a subject of negotiations between the Labour Bureau and the Chinese authorities themselves. I think we can be quite certain of this fact, that the Chinaman, being an extremely intelligent and clever individual, will demand a wage satisfactory to himself, and one which the mine-owners are prepared to give him. Then the noble Lord expressed regret that the hours of labour had not been decided upon. I do not know what he considers a fair day's work, but, if I remember correctly, nine hours is the limit in the Trinidad Ordinance, and I believe I am equally correct in saying that a labourer is entitled to work up to fifteen hours a day if he desires to do so. I assume that if something between that minimum and maximum number of hours is decided upon the noble Lord would be content—that is to say, something between ten and eleven hours a day. I think the Kaffir works ten hours in South Africa, and, therefore, I suppose it would not be a hardship if the Chinaman was asked to do the same.

The other point raised by the noble Lord was with regard to the contract itself. That matter was raised in the debate a fortnight ago, and I thought at that time that the noble Marquess on the Front Bench opposite (The Marquess of Ripon) made a very reasonable and proper demand when he said that the contract should be fully explained to the Chinamen before they left their native shores. We all agree that that was quite a reasonable contention. The noble Lord will have noticed that the Secretary of State has distinctly stated that every precaution shall be taken to ensure that every immigrant thoroughly understands the terms of the contract, not only before he leaves the port of embarkation, but before he leaves his own district to go down to the port. It is quite true that there are many points which appear still to be unsettled, and the reason for that is very easy to explain. It is because the final regulations have not yet been completely drawn up. The Secretary of State is still waiting for them, and we anticipate receiving them from Lord Milner at no very distant date. I can assure the noble Lord that when we do receive those regulations they will contain provisions giving effect to all the promises which the Secretary of State made in the House of Commons. I pass to the noble Lord's observations with regard to the Trinidad Ordinance. I understood him to say that under that Ordinance the immigrants were not required to reside on the plantations in which they worked.

LORD STANMORE: That is not quite what I said. What I said was, that they were not obliged to remain on the plantation; that after the day's work was done they were free till the next day's work began, whereas under this Ordinance they must never leave the premises of the employer without a permit.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I do not think the Trinidad Ordinance is quite in conformity with the views of the noble Lord. It is provided in that Ordinance, with regard to residence, that the indentured immigrants are to reside on the plantations where they are under indenture.

LORD STANMORE: Hear, hear!

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: And the Trinidad Ordinance further provides that indentured immigrants are entitled to a day and a night's absence after two weeks of satisfactory work, but not more than seven days at one time or twenty-six days in one year. I understand those regulations to mean that the indentured labourer has to reside upon the plantation in exactly the same way as the Chinaman will have to reside upon the premises in South Africa.

Lord STANMORE: I apologise for again interrupting the noble Duke, but I must explain what I said and what I mean. It is quite true that an immigrant in Trinidad was compelled to reside on the estate; that is to say, in the barrack or house provided for him. But when his work was done he was free to go where he liked for the rest of the day, so long as he returned to work the next morning. An immigrant may leave a plantation without ceasing to reside on it; residence is one thing, but perpetual presence, as provided in the South African Ordinance, is another.

***The Duke of MARLBOROUGH**: I will not pursue that subject further, but I think that my contention is not an inaccurate one, that the principles of the Trinidad Ordinance and the one which is going to be applied to South Africa is not dissimilar. I may inform the noble Lord that there have been a few amendments in the clauses of the Trinidad Ordinance, but they are very insignificant and do not in any way affect the principle of the Ordinance, and I do not think the noble Lord would receive any further information if we republished it. I do not know that I can give the noble Lord any more information. But I can assure him, in conclusion, that it is the desire of the Secretary of State to embody in the regulations, which we hope to receive shortly, all those promises and conditions which my right hon. friend has more than once stated with perfect clearness in the House of Commons.

***Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY**: My Lords, I must apologise to your Lordshiy's for intruding so soon after my advent to this House, but owing to the great importance of this question of the treatment of races whom we call inferior, engaged under conditions of labour which are not fully free, and the fact that this Ordinance has so entirely omitted to take the necessary safeguards which should accompany such a dangerous form of engagement of labour, I would venture to make a few remarks upon the speech which has just been delivered by the noble Duke. The noble Duke put aside some of the contentions of the noble Lord, and seemed to treat them as absurd and unpractical. But I should like to ask those who are responsible for this Ordinance, whether they consider the whole series of Ordinances which have been passed and have been in force for the past half century in various tropical and sub-tropical colonies absurd and unpractical. The noble Duke spoke of the inclination some Chinamen had of leaving the country without taking their wives with them, and the impossibility of compelling them to take their wives; but I would point out that in all the other Colonial Ordinances of the last fifty years the difficulty, suggested by the noble Duke, in obtaining a due proportion of women immigrants has been overcome. The Colonial Office is daily administering those Ordinances, and, I assume, are administering them correctly, and where there is a requirement that 40, 50, or 60 per cent. of women should accompany the immigrants they see that this proportion of women go. This is being done every day of their administration. If you leave the onus of bringing the women upon the importer, whose interest, I think we may put it, is rather to get the maximum return for his money with the minimum obligation to consider the claims of labour, it will be very easy for him to instruct his recruiting officers to engage only bachelors. All that the Secretary of State for the Colonies has promised has been that where a married man wishes to bring his wife then the authorities will insist that that wife shall have a free passage at the expense of the importer; but if there is no obligation upon the recruiter to see that a reasonable proportion of the sexes is maintained he will simply enlist bachelors, or persons who state that they do not wish to bring their wives.

Where you have a servile kind of labour such as this is, it becomes the duty of the State to step in and remedy those shortcomings which in the case of free contract can be remedied by labour itself. I say, therefore, that it does not lie in the mouth of any member of the Government to say that it is impracticable and absurd to propose to secure, by compulsory legislation, the importation of a reasonable number of women. Then we were told that the rate of wages was not yet decided. I find, in reading these Papers, that there is a very careful list of things which the regulations may deal with, one of them being the quantity and quality of the rations. The regulations which deal with the rations might surely have dealt also with the rate of wages. If they do not it may well be argued on the principle *expressio unicus est negatio alterius* that the rate of wages does not come within the scope of the regulations. We have been told by Lord Stanmore that in other colonies steps have been taken to secure that the wages shall not fall materially below those of free labour for similar employment in the district. Something of that kind might have been put in. When the Government tell us they are contemplating it we take that as a pledge, and therefore we may assume that they are in correspondence with the colony and taking steps to secure a reasonable rate of wages to these indentured labourers either by adequate regulations, or, if necessary, by insisting on an Amendment of the Ordinance.

There is the other point—and it is a very important one—upon which the noble Duke did not touch, namely, as to how far you can vary an Ordinance by regulation, and how far this Ordinance leaves scope for framing proper regulations under it. That, however, is not so very material, because, after the promises of the Government, we must assume, if they are advised by those whose duty it is to advise them that the regulations they propose to frame go beyond the powers conferred upon them by the Ordinance, that the Ordinance will have to be sent back for amendment before any action can be taken upon it. The next point was as to hours of labour. The noble Lord who initiated this discussion told us that in Trinidad the hours of labour were laid down at nine hours a day, and the noble Duke informed us that there was a power by which the coolie, if he liked, could work voluntarily up to fifteen hours. The noble Duke proceeded to say that it would not be unreasonable to split the difference between the two figures, which he worked out at ten or eleven hours, but which I should have made twelve. There is a great difference between an obligation to work for nine hours with a permission, if you may demand overtime, to work for a few hours more, and an elastic stretch of that by saying that because a man may, in time of pressure, work up to fifteen hours, therefore you contemplate allowing the mine-owner to put into his indenture an eleven or twelve hour day. I do not think such a prospect should be held out to any kind of labour. Nothing is said about Sunday or any other day of rest for these men.

I must say it was with some satisfaction that I heard the answer of the noble Duke that there were many points still unsettled, and that final regulations were not yet drawn up. One of the best things that has resulted from debating this Ordinance has been that day after day, as the discussion proceeds, fresh concessions have been made on the part of the Government. Until public opinion was directed to this Ordinance the concessions were all to the mine-owner and none to the men to be imported. I think the noble Lord who introduced this matter was rather trifled with by the noble Duke in his reply. The noble Lord made his point perfectly clear. He pointed out that, while the coolie was required to reside on the estate, residence was not interpreted in a strict or narrow sense, and that great liberty was allowed him so long as he performed his task of labour. If the words of the Trinidad Ordinance, which the noble Duke quoted, are to his mind so satisfactory and so entirely cover what is wanted in South Africa, I would make this offer: Will he amend the South African Ordinance by substituting the words of the Trinidad Ordinance? Surely that is a fair offer in view of the statement of the noble Duke that the words of the Trinidad Ordinance express what it is wished to be done. The noble Duke stated that the indentured immigrants under the Trinidad Ordinance were entitled to a day and a night's absence after a week of satisfactory work and further extension of legalised absence during the year. Those words are very different from the provision contained in this Ordinance, where no absence is of right and all depends on the permission of the employer. In this matter every moral and social consideration seems to have been passed over by the Ordinance. You cannot degrade any kind of labour without degrading all labour, and I feel that to have any class working in a British colony under such conditions as are contemplated in this Ordinance must be humiliating to those who sanction them and degrading to the country which accepts them.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I should not have intruded myself in this debate if it had not been for a question almost of a personal kind and which may possibly be regarded as concerning others also. In the debate that took place in another place on 16th February the Colonial Secretary referred to words of mine presumably spoken in this House. He said—

> "I understand that in another place the Archbishop of Canterbury was fully satisfied with the assurances which he received from my noble friend Lord Onslow."

I do not take exception to these words of the Colonial Secretary if they are taken with their context and rightly understood. On a former occasion I was dealing specially with two points—indeed, almost exclusively with one point—namely, the moral question and the precautions that ought to be taken to avoid the moral dangers arising from this importation. I also referred to a question which has occupied some attention this evening, the question of the importation of wives together with the labourers. I am ready to admit that the assurances which were given on that particular point as regards precautions against moral mischief seem to me, provided this Chinese importation takes place at all, to be as satisfactory as circumstances admit. With regard to the wives I would ask to be allowed to say a few words more to-night.

I have had during the last few days a somewhat exceptional opportunity of obtaining information on this particular subject. I have had the advantage of conversation with a gentleman of very high qualifications and standing, who was for many years captain of a large steamer engaged almost exclusively in conveying the Chinese labourer to the Malay Peninsula, to Siam, to Java, and to other regions to which such emigration takes place. He has given me a great many details which I do not find in the Blue-books, but to which I am disposed to attach the fullest credence, as to the manners and the ways of the Chinaman in this particular matter. As far as he could judge, after careful consideration of the point, his opinion is that in the exportation of labourers from China, not more than 3 per cent. of the wives belonging to the men are ever exported in the first instance. The question not only interested this gentleman as a shipmaster, but also as a philanthropist; and he assures me that the universal custom of the Chinaman of the labouring class when emigrating is, if he be a married man, to leave his wife and his family at home. I understand that it is by no means an uncommon thing in the Malay Peninsula and elsewhere, where the Chinaman works and lives under different conditions from those laid down for South Africa, for him to go back to China after his first period of indenture has been satisfied, and then to bring his wife and family back with him to settle. But the conditions under this Ordinance are very different. Presumably it is open to the Chinaman who emigrates under this Ordinance, and takes his place in the compound to which he is indentured, to go back to China and then come back re-indentured for a fresh start. Whether in such a case he would be likely to claim his legal right to take his wife with him I cannot tell. I fully admit that I, for one, in ignorance of the habits of the Chinaman, may have misunderstood this question of the wives accompanying their husbands, and may have regarded the new Ordinance in that respect as fraught with a peril or a hardship greater than I personally now believe it to be.

The words which I am supposed to have used to the effect that I was perfectly satisfied with the assurances which had been given must be taken only in connection with the particular detail I was discussing, and would therefore be inaccurate except in a very limited sense. On the moral question, and the evils that might spring from it, and also on the question of the wives, I honestly admit that it does not seem to be clear at this moment what more the Government can do, if the proposed emigration is to take place at all. But if it is understood, and in my case it has been understood, that I am prepared to regard all that has now occurred or is going to occur as in all respects satisfactory, I must guard myself from the imputation of having said anything of the kind. The conditions of necessity which are alleged to exist in South Africa for the importation of Chinese labour are regarded from various points of view. The necessity is either accepted, criticised, challenged, or denied by different persons; and the Blue-book circulated to-day shows that there are not a few critics—whether wholly inspired by a disinterested desire either for the welfare of the Transvaal itself or for the welfare of the Chinamen it is not for me to say—but a considerable number of critics believe the necessity to be less great than is alleged. On this point I find myself unable without ampler information than we possess from any impartial source to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. After careful study of all the contents of these two Blue-books, I still do not know enough about it to satisfy myself completely. I will only say, that if it be true that a necessity has arisen which involves the importation of Chinese labour, under the conditions which are laid down in the Ordinance, while I may regretfully admit the necessity, I am certainly not prepared to express myself satisfied with what has happened in the ordinary sense in which the word "satisfied" is used.

I mention this now because in a subsequent debate in another place another speaker of some prominence again referred to the assurance which I was supposed to have given—namely, that I was perfectly satisfied in this matter. These references to my supposed words have resulted in my receiving correspondence from different parts of the country expressing surprise that I should so express myself, and asking me to say where and how I did so express myself. I do not know whether the Colonial Secretary was alluding to my speech or to private communications which he supposed me to have made either to Lord Onslow or to the noble Duke (the Duke of Marlborough). But I certainly have not to the best of my belief used any such expression, and if I can be shown to have done so, I must have used the expression in a strictly limited sense; corresponding to the explanation I have just given to your Lordships.

I feel that, if indeed the necessity be real, it is one of the most regrettable necessities that has ever arisen in the history of our colonial government—that it should be found necessary under the British flag, and under Christian civilisation, to arrange for the importation of labour where conditions are laid down that the labourers imported shall not be permitted to utilise any exceptional powers they may have, or fulfil the desire to rise above the conditions of the merest drudges, doing the lowest kind of work, whatever their qualifications for some higher kind of labour may be. That these conditions should be imposed presumably for the protection of white workmen who are in fear lest the virtues of these labourers should prove dangerous to their competitors seems to me to be a somewhat pitiful admission. The decision whether or not the existence of the necessity has been proved is a decision for which those in the colony, and at home, who are obliged to act administratively in this matter, must accept the responsibility. Certainly, if it be a necessity, it is one which I personally feel to be of a very painful kind, of a very lamentable kind, and one which is not without its elements of humiliation. In no general way therefore can I express myself as being satisfied with the position at which we have arrived in this question, which I honestly believe to be one of the most difficult of the problems that have for many years presented themselves to those who are responsible for our colonial government.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I propose to confine the few observations which I desire to make entirely to the question of the Ordinance itself. Of course, there is the much larger question which was touched upon in a spirit I greatly rejoiced to hear, by the most rev. Primate who has just sat down—the question as to whether it is right that a system of this kind should, for any reason, or with any object, be established in a British colony. I made some observations upon that point on the previous occasion, and I do not propose to trouble your Lordships with any further remarks upon it to-night. But I must be permitted to say that I think the reply which was made by the noble Duke was really very inadequate to the questions which were submitted to the House by Lord Stanmore. He evidently did not desire to enter into the discussion of these questions, and he entirely passed many of them by. My noble friend Lord Stanmore mentioned certain doubts which he entertained in respect to the power of the Government, at home or in the Transvaal, to pass regulations which would in any way interfere with the provisions of the Ordinance itself. I am not going to express any opinion of my own on that subject. I am not a lawyer. Mr. Lyttelton is a lawyer, and an eminent lawyer, and it would be presumptuous in me to attempt to contradict his opinion on those questions. But I confess I should have liked to have heard from the noble Duke whether those difficulties have been considered, and whether His Majesty's Government are satisfied that the pledges of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, which I have not the smallest doubt he intends to fulfil in their entirety, can be fulfilled without an amendment of the Ordinance. For my own part I should have been very glad to see the Ordinance amended, because it will stand as the law of the Transvaal; and I am bound to say that it reflects very little credit upon the Government of the Transvaal, or upon those who have advocated it in that country.

The Blue-book which has come into our hands this morning is full of interesting information, and I hope your Lordships will allow me to again express my strong feeling that this House is not rightly treated with regard to the circulation of important Papers. These Papers were in the newspapers yesterday. They were, I believe, delivered to Members of the House of Commons yesterday; but they only reached your Lordships this morning. I have often referred to this delay, and I cannot help mentioning it again. I have been told that it is not the fault of the Government or of the officers of this House. Somebody's fault it is, and I beg the noble Marquess, the Leader of the House, to give his attention to this. The thing can be altered, and it ought to be altered. I have spent the whole morning in endeavouring, rather imperfectly, to read these Papers, and I certainly found them an interesting study. After studying the Blue-book I have come to the conclusion that those who discussed this Ordinance in the Transvaal Legislative Assembly—those who supported it, and those who opposed it alike—cared nothing at all, or very little, about the interests of the people they were going to import. The supporters of the Ordinance wished to secure cheap labour for the Transvaal mines, and those who opposed it wanted to secure that no Chinaman should get out of the compound. As for the unfortunate Chinaman,—when he got into the compound and what was to be done with him there—little or no consideration was given to that matter at all. I am bound to say that I think that does not reflect any credit upon those who had anything to do with the matter.

I observe from these Papers that Lord Milner is getting a little impatient in respect to the suspension of the sanction to the Ordinance; but I am afraid he must be good enough to wait. This is a question which has greatly roused the feelings of the people of this country. There is no real hurry. You will not get one Chinaman more into the Transvaal by passing this Ordinance to-morrow than you will if you pass it six months hence. Therefore it is not right that it should be pressed forward unduly. I am very glad to see that Mr. Lyttelton has adopted the suggestion made in this and in the other House, and that he is not going, as I understand, to give his sanction to the Ordinance until he is satisfied that the regulations which he requires will be agreed to. That, my Lords, is satisfactory, and if he adheres to that line I dare say those amendments will, in the main, be accepted. But, even so, this Ordinance will still remain, as my noble friend described it in the former discussion, and as I ventured to describe it on the same occasion, basing my statement on an answer given by the Secretary of State in the other House of Parliament—this Ordinance will still remain unique among Ordinances of this kind, and I hope it will be the last time that any British colony will propose legislation of this description. It is, of course, quite possible that the view of Mr. Lyttelton may be correct, and that the things he requires can all be done by regulation. But I agree with my noble friend on the Cross Benches that it was an error to have left so much to regulations. Nobody knows what can or may be done under the Ordinance if the view taken of the legal question is correct, and we must therefore wait until we receive these regulations and see in what shape they are put. The Government have pledged themselves—and I have no doubt they will keep their pledges—definitely to make these changes, and they must therefore be made, and be made in a manner which will in some way or other get rid of the contradictory provisions of the Ordinance itself.

The noble Duke said he did not think it was desirable to lay down a hard and fast rule in reference to the proportion of women to be introduced. I think he said it would not work. But it is working in other places. What can be made to work in Trinidad can surely be made to work in the Transvaal. If there is no compulsion the recruiters in China, as was pointed out by my noble friend Lord Stanley, will take care to introduce only single men, and then you will be landed in precisely the position against which so many protests were made when the matter was discussed here on a previous occasion. That, however, is, I understand, going to be dealt with. It is essential that it should be dealt with, and I earnestly hope it will be dealt with on a fair and satisfactory basis. Again, you must not permit these men to be introduced into the colony unless they have a guarantee of a fair minimum wage. There is in this proposed system the fatal evil, which was pointed out by the most rev. Primate, that you are prohibiting these men from rising in the world. You are saying to them, "You shall do nothing but the lowest labour," and that to my mind is an additional reason why you should prescribe a minimum wage.

There is one point in connection with this Ordinance upon which I should like to ask either for an explanation now or for consideration on the part of His Majesty's Government. There are provisions in the Blue-book in regard to penalties for offences against the Ordinance. It is provided in Section 2 that—

> "Any person who in any way aids, abets, or assists any labourer, directly or indirectly, to contravene or evade, or to attempt to contravene or evade, the provisions of this Ordinance, shall, unless otherwise provided, be liable to the penalties set out in Section 6."

Section 6 provides that he shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £500, and, in default of payment, imprisonment not exceeding two years. Then, in Section 10, it is provided that—

> "Any person who shall harbour or conceal any labourer who has deserted from the service of his importer, or who has committed any breach of the Ordinance, or who shall aid and abet any labourer to desert, shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £50, and, in default of payment, imprisonment not exceeding three months."

I can perfectly well understand that it should be provided, if this system is to be adopted at all, that any person who is aggrieved by the act of another person inducing his labourer to desert, should have a civil action for damages against that person; but it does seem to me to be inconsistent with sound principles of jurisprudence, and inconsistent with what is just and right, that you should make this offence a criminal offence. It recalls to one's recollection the whole controversy in the United States many years ago about the fugitive slave law. Deal with the question as a civil offence as between man and man and I press no objection, if the system is to be adopted; but if you deal with it as a criminal offence you will be setting the very worst precedent possible in regard to a matter of this kind. I do not know whether such a law exists anywhere else, but I doubt it, because it is contrary to the tendency of our jurisprudence. I mention it particularly now, because I do not think it has been touched upon in the discussions either here or in the other House. I only ask that it shall receive the consideration of His Majesty's Government before they finally arrange the shape in which this law is drawn. I hope that the earliest opportunity will be given to Parliament to consider these regulations when they are made. The Colonial Secretary in the other House seemed to be rather offended that anybody wanted to see them, as if it implied some reflection upon himself. It implies no reflection. It is the duty of Parliament, and especially of the Opposition, to see the *ipsissima verba*, and, as we have done a great deal to get this Ordinance amended, we should be given a full and complete opportunity of discussing the regulations when they are made and of seeing whether they carry out in a suitable manner the promises of the Secretary of State.

EARL CARRINGTON: My Lords, before the noble Marquess replies I should like to ask for a definite answer to a Question which I will submit to him. In the telegram appearing on page 25 of the Blue-book from Mr. Lyttelton to Governor Viscount Milner, there occurs this statement made by the Colonial Secretary in the course of his speech in the House of Commons on 16th February—

> "When he (the Chinese labourer) arrives at the mines he is no doubt to live in what is a Chinese village or location. It is considerably different from a compound, because it is a place fitted for the reception of Asiatics, and is to be carefully prepared by those who know Asiatic customs and habits."

That telegram was answered on 20th February by Lord Milner, who telegraphed—

> "I have had a complete list made of your pledges and requirements, and care will be taken to embody all of them."

The question I wish to ask is this: When the Chinaman arrives at the mines, what is the Chinese village referred to in Lord Milner's telegram to be? Is it to be an open village like the Chinese villages in Australia, or is it to be a compound like the Kaffirs live in at Kimberley, with a stockade surrounding it? If it is to be an open village, there will be all the difficulties that we experienced in Australia between the Chinese and the white women. We had a Royal Commission to inquire into that subject, and the horrors of the condition of things obtaining and the pitch of degradation to which those unfortunate women had fallen were so bad that we were unable to incorporate them in the Report. I think it is important that the House should know whether there is to be an open village or a compound.

***THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE)**: My Lords, let me, in the first place, assure the noble Marquess that I will endeavour to discover, and take to task, that mysterious individual who stands between your Lordships' House and the timely possession of these important documents. We have all of us occasionally suffered from these delays, and I will do my best to prevent their recurring. But I am bound to say that my noble friend the Under-Secretary for the Colonies tells me that, as the Papers were not in your Lordships' hands, he suggested that this discussion might be postponed. That suggestion, however, was not acceptable to the noble Lord, Lord Stanmore, and so the debate came on. We have had, what we sometimes experience in this House, a very limited Motion followed by a somewhat unlimited discussion. I do not complain of that, amongst other reasons for these—that it gave us the opportunity of hearing, for the first time, my noble friend Lord Stanley of Alderley, who will no doubt often take a distinguished part in our proceedings, and also because it gave the most rev. Primate the opportunity of telling your Lordships that at one point, at all events, he was better satisfied with the Government case than he had been in the first instance. Well, my Lords, this Ordinance is now law.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: Has it been approved?

***THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE**: As far as the Colonial Legislature is concerned it is settled; and the question we have to consider is what modifications it should undergo in order to make it in accordance with the views of His Majesty's Government. The text of the regulations to be drawn under it is not yet in the hands of the Secretary of State. He has not yet had an opportunity of fully considering them, our discussions with the Chinese Government have only just begun, and it is, therefore, so it seems to me, a little premature to proceed as if the whole of our proposals were already in your Lordships' hands. At any rate, it is not very profitable to proceed with the line of discussion which has been followed a good deal this evening with the object of determining whether the Ordinance in its present form does or does not leave room for regulations according to the pledges which have been given by His Majesty's Government. As to that I am inclined to suggest to your Lordships that we may trust the Secretary of State for the Colonies to make good his pledges, and that, knowing what we do of his legal attainments, we may feel pretty sure that he is not likely to run us into anything irregular or illegal.

A good deal of attention has been called this evening to the Trinidad Ordinance and to the difference between the terms of that Ordinance and the Ordinance we are now discussing. The Trinidad Ordinance is no doubt extremely valuable as an illustration of the present case; but I think we should keep it in mind that the Trinidad case is, in many essential particulars, fundamentally different from the South African case. In the case of Trinidad the object has been to induce Indian coolies to come to the colony and to settle and remain there with their wives and families. Now—let us be perfectly frank—that is not the case with the Asiatic labourers whom it is proposed to attract to South Africa. They are not regarded as a desirable element to be introduced permanently into the South African community, and therefore it is sought to bring them to the Transvaal only for a limited period, at the end of which they will be repatriated to their own country. It is, therefore, to my mind not in the least surprising that this Ordinance should be described, as it has been more than once this evening, as utterly unlike other Ordinances with which we have been familiar. That again, it seems to me, is an excellent reason why the question of the importation of female emigrants should be dealt with in a different fashion. We have been told again and again that in other cases a specified percentage of wives has been insisted upon. I am told that in the case of these Chinese emigrants, it would be virtually impossible to insist upon any such percentage. I am assured that in China the custom is for the young men to marry at an extremely youthful age, frequently at fifteen or sixteen years, and that a Chinese bachelor is comparatively a rare article in the country. If you are to attempt to compel these youthful Benedicks to bring their ladies with them to South Africa, it seems to me you are running a very good chance of making the whole of these arrangements nugatory and ridiculous.

Another point that was made with regard to the Trinidad Ordinance was this. We were told that, whereas the African Ordinance was extremely severe and harshly drawn in the matter of the compulsory residence of the immigrant within the premises of his employer, the Trinidad Ordinance, on the contrary, was most liberally drawn and allowed the immigrant a great amount of latitude as to coming and going to and from the place of his employment. Is it the case that the Trinidad Ordinance in this respect is quite such a milk-and-water document as Lord Stanmore would have us believe? Let me read to your Lordships a few lines from the Trinidad Ordinance—

> "Each indentured immigrant shall be bound to reside on the plantation whereon he is under indenture. Where any immigrant is found on a public highway, or on any land or in any house not being the land or house of his employer, or in any ship, vessel, or boat within the waters of the island, any of the following persons—that is to say (1) the protector or any person authorised in writing by him; (2) any estate constable attached to the plantation to which the immigrant is under indenture; and (3) the employer of the immigrant or his manager or overseer—may without warrant stop such immigrant, and in case he fails to produce a certificate of industrial residence or of exemption from labour, or a ticket of leave, may, if there be reasonable cause to suspect the immigrant is under indenture, arrest him and take him to the nearest police station, there to be detained until he can be taken before a stipendiary justice of the peace. If, upon such immigrant being brought before a stipendiary justice of the peace, it appears in respect of what plantation his services are due and he fails to prove that at the time of his being arrested he was absent from such plantation by virtue of a ticket of leave, the stipendiary justice, if he sees fit, may order such immigrant to be returned to the estate to which he is indentured, or to be imprisoned, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding seven days."

I think the Trinidad coolie who desires to have a little change of air will find that this Ordinance operates pretty stiffly.

LORD STANMORE: What is the date of the Ordinance?

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: 1901. One word with regard to the question of wives. There again there is no analogy between the domestic arrangements of the Indian coolie and the domestic arrangements of the Chinaman; and if we were to resort to the provisions of the Trinidad Ordinance we should probably have to fall back upon the extremely rough and ready method which I understand the noble Lord to suggest—I think he said that 40 females should accompany every 100 male immigrants from China. I have been asked a question with regard to the nature and character of the compounds. I wish I could give accurate particulars as to the description of Chinese village which it is intended to establish in the Transvaal. I am afraid I cannot do so. But it is interesting to note that in the original draft of this Ordinance it is stated in the definition clause that the word premises "shall include the place where labourers are actually engaged in work and one mile in every direction from such place." That was in the draft Ordinance, but was omitted because it was felt that an area two miles across in every direction might have the effect of bringing a Chinese village into the most populous part, say of the city of Johannesburg. Therefore the actual area of the compounds has not been defined. I mention this merely as showing that in the minds of those who originally drew this Ordinance what was present was not a tiny stockade or enclosure as has sometimes been described but at any rate a fairly extensive place assigned for the residence of these Chinese immigrants.

EARL CARRINGTON: Practically an open village.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I am afraid I do not know what an open village is. But I do not for a moment suggest to your Lordships that the conditions contained in this Ordinance are not conditions of an onerous character. They certainly are. It is perfectly true that the people of these colonies are torn in two directions, first by the desire to obtain labour for the mines, and next by the desire that these Asiatics should not establish themselves in and pervade the country. Therefore their introduction is not incorrectly described as a regrettable necessity; and one would have been glad to see the introduction of labour under conditions of a more generous and liberal nature. But let us remember that these conditions are conditions which the immigrants are perfectly free to refuse if they do not like them. One thing is clearly understood—that the terms of these contracts are to be fully explained to every immigrant before he leaves his own country; and I do not believe that, as a rule, the Chinese immigrant is so ignorant or unsuspecting that he will accept any conditions, no matter what they are, which may be offered to him by the importers. The assent of the Chinese Government has, moreover, to be obtained to the whole of these arrangements, and at this moment discussions are in progress with the Chinese Minister to this Court on the subject. Therefore I venture to say let us try this experiment, let us insist upon every precaution which ingenuity can devise for the purpose of preventing abuses, but at any rate let us try to give it a chance of success. After all, no one disputes the right of the Colonies, or indeed, of any country, to exclude alien labour altogether; and if it is to be admitted, surely it is fair that the conditions under which it is to be admitted should be carefully thought out and should be in a case of this kind of a comparatively strict character. We have on the other hand undertaken that these regulations shall be as reasonable and as humane as we can make them; and I suggest to your Lordships that it would be time enough to take us to task when the experiment has been tried and when it is possible to show that any of the evils which have been anticipated by some of your Lordships have actually taken place.

EARL SPENCER: I only rise to ask the noble Marquess a Question. We all know how very important the regulations have now become; in fact, they take the place to some extent of provisions which in other cases are included in the Ordinance. The noble Marquess has said that the Government will exercise their ingenuity and skill in making the regulations as complete as possible. They are still undergoing consideration by the Government, and I desire to know whether the noble Marquess will, on behalf of the Government, undertake that the Ordinance itself will not be legalised until Parliament has had the opportunity of fully considering the regulations.

*THE MARQUESS OF **LANSDOWNE**: I am afraid I cannot give that undertaking.

*LORD **STANMORE**: My Lords, it is not my intention to persevere with the Motion, because the Ordinances for which I have moved are readily accessible to all of your Lordships who desire to see them. I have to thank the noble Duke who represents the Colonial Office for the kindness of his expressions with regard to myself, but I have this complaint against him, that I asked him a Question and that he did not answer it. The Question which I asked him was whether it was intended, in certain cases which I pointed out, to proceed by regulations or by amendment of the Ordinance, and to that Question—that very grave Question—he returned no answer at all. No doubt we shall have other opportunities of recurring to this matter. But after what fell from the noble Marquess I feel compelled to say a few words with regard to the Trinidad Ordinance. The Ordinance which the noble Marquess has quoted was passed only three years ago, and, therefore, does not concern the Ordinances of which I spoke, which had been in force for half a century previous, but rather tends to confirm what I ventured to say with regard to the absence of that attention on the part of the Colonial Office which used to be given to the position and *status* of imported immigrants. Even as the clause stands as read by the noble Marquess, it is not inconsistent with what I stated, because the immigrant would have to be brought before a magistrate, and the magistrate would find nothing on which to convict him. His absence after the legal work of the day was done could not be turned into an illegal absence from the estate. I shall not detain the House by speaking further on that point, but the noble Marquess may rest well assured that residence in the Trinidad sense is an extremely different thing from the residence contemplated in this Ordinance, which is imprisonment within the narrow premises of the employer. I would call the attention of the House to the very serious effect which this Ordinance may have in other colonies where immigrant labour is employed. In all those colonies, as I have said, it was always necessary to keep a careful watch against abuses. There was always a party in them who wished for the enactment of more stringent regulations putting further pressure upon the immigrant, in order, as Lord Grey said, to force him to work by a system of servitude. All those persons will have their views most strongly reinforced by the existence of this Ordinance. They will say that such and such things have been done in the Transvaal repressive of the labourers' rights, and they will ask why they are precluded in the other labour-employing colonies from exercising the same repression. It is difficult enough to fight against that influence as it is, but it will be ten times more difficult when they have this precedent to back it up.

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNCILS) BILL [H.L.];

POLLING ARRANGEMENTS (PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHS) BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES (METRIC SYSTEM) BILL [H.L.].

The Lord Addington added to the Select Committee.

House adjourned at a quarter before Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 4*th March*, 1904.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Blyth and Cowpen Gas Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Metropolitan Common Scheme (Farnborough) Provisional Order Bill; Metropolitan Common Scheme (Hillingdon

East) Provisional Order Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP B).

Mr. FISON reported from the Committee on Group B of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Tuesday next, at half-past Eleven o'clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Corbridge Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time) Bill. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill. Reported, with an Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Kirkby-in-Ashfield Urban District Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill, with Amendments.

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Northwich; Long Clawson (two); Runcorn; Wakefield; Lancaster; Tipton Heath; Portmadoc; Repton; Bristol; Willesden; Govan; Llandarmoninyal; Hull; Derby (three); Cockermouth; Southport (three); Ainsdale; Crossens; Plumstead; Northop Hall; Bwlcederwyn; Leicester; Okehampton; Penketh; Ystradgynlais (two); Llangynidr; Chorley; Brimington; Ashwell; Brighton (two); Hove; Liverpool; Pontardawe; Pontardulais; Brynamman; and Oxford; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOUR ORDINANCE).

Petition from Radcliffe, for withdrawal; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BANKRUPTCY COURTS (IRELAND).

Annual Returns presented, of the Official Assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland and the local courts, Belfast and Cork, for the year 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

QUEEN ANNE'S BOUNTY.

Copy presented, of Annual Report and Accounts of the Governors for the year 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1904–05 (VOTE ON ACCOUNT).

Estimate presented, showing the several Services for which a Vote on Account is required for the year ending 31st March, 1905 [by Command]; Referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 83.]

PAUPERISM (ENGLAND AND WALES) (HALF-YEARLY STATEMENTS).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 15th February; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 84.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Closing of Irish Sub-Post Offices on Whit Monday.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that on the Bank Holiday Whit Monday sub-post offices are permitted to close their premises, he will consider the advisability of extending this privilege to Ireland.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) There is, speaking generally, no difference in England and in Ireland in the rules as regards the closing of sub-post offices on Bank Holidays, but it seems that Whit Monday is not observed in Ireland as a public holiday to the same extent as in England, and some modification may in certain cases be made in the practice as regards closing post offices on that day in order to meet the public convenience. If the hon. Member has any special case in view in which he thinks the present practice might with advantage be modified, I shall be happy to consider it if he will furnish the necessary particulars.

Cashing Postal Orders at Sub-Post Offices.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware of the inconvenience experienced by the refusal of sub-post offices to cash postal orders when presented because they bear the name of the town and not their particular districts; and, if so, will he give instructions that all such orders may be cashed at any sub-post office in the town upon which it is made payable.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) It is the practice to cash postal orders which bear the name of a town at the head office of the town or at any branch office. To extend this practice to all the sub-offices in a large town would be likely, I fear, to facilitate fraud, and would render it very difficult to comply with requests often made by remitters to stop payment of orders.

Post Office Deferred Annuities.

Sir JAMES RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state what number of persons have bought deferred annuities in the Post Office of a value not less than £6 10s., commencing at the age of sixty-five years until death.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Savings Bank deferred annuities are not granted to commence at a specified age, but at the expiration of a specified term of years. It is, however, found that the number of persons who have purchased deferred annuities of not less than £6 10s. per annum through the Post Office, to commence at an age not earlier than sixty-five years, is 105.

Transfer of Lock Keeper Thomas Madden.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the case of Thomas Madden, lock keeper at the Park Lock, on the Grand Canal at Limerick, who is to be transferred; and whether, seeing that this family has been in the service of the Board of Works for a great many years, and that some members of the family are working in Limerick, and that a transfer would mean eviction, he can arrange that this man shall not be transferred.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) It has been found necessary to make certain changes in the duties of the keeper of the Park Lock at Limerick, and to select a man fitted for the new arrangements. This involved the transfer of Madden, and he was offered the keepership of another lock, but declined it as a matter of family convenience. His son has been appointed to the lock which he declined.

Military Expenditure.

Sir EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the total estimated military expenditure of this country in each of the financial years 1900–1901, 1901–2, 1902–3, 1903–4, 1904–5, including Supplementary Votes and expenditure under Works Bills.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*)

Year.	Expenditure on Estimates.		Expenditure on Loans.	Total.
	Apart from War.	War Expenditure.		
	£	£	£	£
1900–01	26,082,544	65,261,000	1,285,772	92,629,316
1901–02	20,528,574	64,132,300	1,749,487	94,410,361
1902–03	28,716,627	40,146,900	1,662,294	70,525,821
§*1903–04	‡29,800,000	7,145,000	3,600,000	40,545,000
*1904–05	‡28,830,000	—	— †	28,830,000

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* As in Army Estimates.

† The Expenditure during 1904–5 on the Military Works Loan cannot at present be estimated.

‡ The figures in the first columns from 1901–02 onwards include expenditure under the "Mowatt" programme for Reserves of Stores, etc.

§ Including Supplementary Estimates of £2,700,000.

Military Expenditure of France, Russia, Germany, and Austria.

SIR EDGAR VINCENT: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the total military expenditure of France, Russia, Germany, and Austria in the years 1900, 1901, 1902, and 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) It is impossible to give the actual expenditure in all cases as in some instances it has not been published. Moreover, in some cases, the Naval Budgets make provision for certain items, such as coast fortifications, which are of a military nature.

The following is the information available:—

	France.	Russia.	Germany.	Austria.
	£	£	£	£
1900	29,369,500	36,837,833†	33,426,500	16,664,772
1901	31,845,833	36,067,333†	34,005,129	17,096,368
1902	32,711,512	35,848,726	32,686,340	16,842,608†
1903	32,188,816	36,647,089	31,880,455	17,183,022†

The German Estimates made no provision for pensions, which are included in a separate budget and amount to about £5,000,000 a year.

4th V.B. Devon Regiment.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the strength of the 4th Volunteer Battalion Devon Regiment has diminished during the last three years as follows: 1st November, 1901, 1,271; 1st November, 1902, 1,119; and 1st November, 1903, 1,042; that this year only four recruits have been enrolled in the two companies A and B at Barnstaple; that a number of men have recently resigned, and that dissatisfaction prevails among non-commissioned officers and men as to the rate of pay allowed when in camp; and, if so, will he say what steps he proposes to take to remedy this state of affairs; and whether it is intended to allow increased pay this year to Volunteers during their attendance in camp.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The figures quoted for the strength are substantially as stated. No report has reached the War Office concerning the condition of the Barnstaple companies. The general question of camp allowances has been brought before the Royal Commission, and no further action can be taken until this body has reported.

TOWN TENANTS (IRELAND) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.) in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said he would appeal to the House to give the measure a fair and even friendly consideration. He knew full well that in some quarters an invitation of that character was thrown away. The hon. Member for Wandsworth, for example, gave notice of his intention to move the rejection of the Bill without even taking the trouble of waiting to see what the Bill would propose to do; and when he took to the warpath and flourished his tomahawk before the Bill was even printed, they might fairly assume that he did not belong to the ranks of those who were open to argument. Evidently it was not the merits of the Bill that troubled him, but perhaps he had come to the conclusion that he should oppose every Irish Bill that came before the House until the Government surrendered to Wandsworth on his pet fad of redistribution. There was no subject more vital to the industrial revival of Ireland than the legal position of the town tenants, and this House, after having by successive and deliberate Acts of Parliament suppressed the industries of Ireland, owed it to Ireland that it should turn a friendly ear to every reasonable proposal that sought to undo that evil work. The terrible drain on the population caused by the appalling emigration from the shores of Ireland must be stemmed, and to do so something more must be done than fix the farmer in his homestead, alleviate the hard lot of the agricultural labourer, or solve the problem of transit. The future of Ireland rested mainly in her towns. and if they were to make the towns prosperous they must sweep away every obstacle to the revival of industries. And what greater or more deadly impediment could they find than a state of affairs under which, on the expiration of a lease, the landlords were permitted to evict solvent town tenants, without giving them compensation for their permanent improvements or for loss of business? It must be obvious that until this disgraceful practice was made impossible, the fear of eviction or confiscation would have a deterrent effect on private enterprise, and that less employment would be given, less valuable property would be created, and less prosperity would exist in every district than would be the case under an equitable system of tenure in towns. The landowner got a much higher rent for the use of his land for houses and shops than for any other purpose. Now, what happened? A building lease was granted, the house was built, and an increased rent had to be paid by every householder to enable the builder or buyer of the house to get his money back, because at the end of the lease the landowner was entitled to claim the house. and also send in a claim for dilapidations, even if the house was going to be pulled down and rebuilt. Was this system calculated to give the working classes the best housing accommodation possible for the money they could afford to pay in rent?

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†These figures show expenditure according to published accounts. The figures not marked show sums voted in the Estimates.

As regarded business premises, the leasehold system operated with greater injustice; the lessor granted a lease and many tradesmen spent large sums in improving their premises, but when they asked for a renewal of the lease, they had to pay an increased rent based upon the improved value caused by their own outlay. The short lease system allowed the ground landlord, without any trouble, industry, or expenditure, to step into an increment at the termination of the lease. It prevented thrift in the working classes and damaged co-operative and building societies, and its effects were peculiarly oppressive to the working classes. It encouraged jerry-building and insufficient maintenance of houses, and tended to raise rents. It produced fag ends of terms of years, and encouraged the house-farmers to buy them up, and, neglecting all duties attaching to property, tended to impoverish the poor. Instead of merely securing protective covenants it enabled the monopolist landlord to impose vexatious and restrictive covenants according to his caprice—covenants which were wholly unnecessary for the security of his rent annuity. He knew of one very enterprising town manufacturing firm in the town of Blarney who had built a magnificent factory and one hundred houses for workmen on a leasehold site. They got no Government loan; every stone was laid and paid for with their own money, and the valuation was over £900 a year; but at the expiry of the lease every inch of the property would be confiscated to the landlord. Was that honest or was it calculated to encourage the country's industrial development? There was not a constituency in Ireland where cruel injustice had not been worked, time and again, against industries and well-deserving tenants. Quite recently there came under his notice a case in Hilltown, county Down, where the rent of James Gribbon was actually trebled on the expiry of his lease, although the landlord never spent one penny on the property. In the neighbouring town of Rathfriland tenants had expended considerable sums of money, only to find, when they thought to put their property in the market, that the landlord denied that the tenant had any right to build, or that the purchaser had any right to fixity of tenure for any period whatever. He knew of two cases in Castlewellan, also in his own constituency, where Lord Annesley arbitrarily evicted two of the most respectable shopkeepers, Mr. James Murray, J.P., and the late Mr. John M'Kenny, and confiscated their property, their improvements, and actually their means of livelihood. All over the Annesley property, in fact, the landlord regarded as solely and entirely his own the houses on which he had never spent a penny, and the law left the poor tenants entirely at his mercy. This same gentleman was also owner of the town of Newcastle, county Down, a sea-side resort which was capable of enormous development, and it was not too much to say that his system of control of the town was the greatest obstacle to its prosperity, and that any improvement which might be made in it would be made, not with his aid, but in spite of him. He owned the land, and would only give building leases on exorbitant terms, and if any resident was aggrieved he had no alternative but to clear out and start life in some other part of the country, where perhaps he would find himself equally dependent on the whim of some other ground landlord.

The position was an absolutely intolerable one all over Ireland, and had only to be stated to make clear what a blighting influence it exercised on the industrial life of the community. These were cases in his own constituency, and if he went outside of that constituency he should be confronted with an embarrassment of riches in the same direction; but he had occasion the other day to investigate a case in Dublin which might be worth bringing under notice. Mr. J. J. Lalor became tenant of a shop in North Earl Street. He took it on a ten years lease at a rent of £156, and at the end of that time, having meantime built up a business there which he could not afford to sacrifice, the landlord took advantage of the fact to demand an increase of £100 a year in the rent. Mr. Lalor offered to pay £228 a year instead of £150, if he could get a renewal of the lease for twenty years; and what was the landlord's answer? A notice to quit within seventeen days! He eventually condescended, however, to agree to a lease for fourteen years at the increased rent of £210. The landlord, he might mention, was Sir Joseph Downes, who posed as a philanthropist, and from time to time gave generous subscriptions to charitable institutions; but if this was the way he got his money, he would suggest that he should henceforth credit the subscriptions to his unfortunate tenants. Mr. Gladstone once spoke of Irish evictions as "sentence of death," and every terminable leasehold in Ireland had in it, according to present conditions and present methods, the material for a sentence to social death. Moreover, it told over again the old story of Sisyphus, for at the end of every period the process had to be begun anew. Wherever one travelled in Ireland to-day he found not only ruined castles, once the homes of prosperity and wealth, and roofless homesteads from which the once happy families had been evicted, but, what was even worse, ruined towns whose industries had been throttled, and the bulk of whose inhabitants had been scattered over the world. The only effect of the systems which had been set up had been to make wealth accumulate and men decay—to make the rich richer and the poor poorer.

Take, too, the position of the artisans. In nearly every town in Ireland they were in no better position than lodgers on sufferance. They might be the most industrious, hardworking, and deserving members of the community, but for two successive weeks they could not call their home their own. In any week they might, at the whim or caprice of the landlord or his agent, be turned out on the street, and they were absolutely without redress. Surely some security of tenure, some protection against the indulgence of personal spleen or political vengeance, should be vouchsafed to the workman who was willing to pay for the accommodation he received, who sought no favours, and who wanted only to be left alone. This question touched the roots of society. Be he peer or be he peasant, the home was his most sacred possession, and no statesman could afford to ignore sentiment in the government of a nation. "The glory of a nation," said John Bright, "is in the happiness of its cottage homes," but what was the position in Ireland? A member of the Government, Sir Horace Plunkett, said in his recent book—

> "The Irishman scarcely seems to have a home in the sense in which an Englishman understands the word. If he love the place of his habitation he does not endeavour to improve or to adorn it, or, indeed, to make it in any sense a reflection of his own mind and taste. He treats life

as if he were a mere sojourner upon earth, whose true home is somewhere else, a fact often attributed to his intense faith in the unseen, but which I regard as not merely due to this cause, but also, and in a large measure, as the natural outcome of historical conditions."

In the city of Belfast matters had been different, because for the past century the ground landlords, the successive Marquesses of Donegal, had been accustomed to grant leases for 999 years, with the result that houses and factories sprang up, and industries were established, until, what a century ago was an unimportant town, had become one of the most prosperous cities in the three Kingdoms. They used to hear much in the land question about the Ulster custom, but there was also a Belfast custom in leaseholds which might with advantage be extended to all Ireland. In Lurgan and in Lisburn the same results had followed the giving of long leases of fee-farm grants. Generally speaking, in fact, the position of tenants in towns in Ulster was much better than in the other three provinces; but taking the country as a whole the condition of house property in the towns was appalling and disgraceful.

Moreover, in no foreign country that he had read of, except perhaps Turkey, did such inequitable laws prevail in regard to the tenure of houses in towns. The system under which the houses built by the tenants became the property of the landlords at the end of a term was unknown in Austria. In Belgium the houses were freehold property. In Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, the landlord must either buy at the official valuation all tenements built by the lessee, or have them removed. House property in Germany was invariably held on freehold tenure, whilst in Italy the tenant could compulsorily acquire his house; and so on in every European country, including even Russia. It was a common idea, however, that the residents of towns in England suffered in the same way as tenants in towns in Ireland, but nothing could be further from the fact. The evidence published in 1887 by the Town Holdings Committee gave no less than 318 returns or statements from town clerks and local solicitors—persons who were specially qualified to give information, and through whom, in fact all the title-deeds and documents had been prepared—as to the tenure prevailing in 258 towns. An analysis of the returns showed that out of the 2,600,000 inhabited houses in England and Wales, outside the Metropolis, only 136,584 of those houses had been built exclusively on the short leasehold system; and when the details were examined, it would be found that all the towns in which the short leasehold had been adopted were towns of comparatively recent growth, and only built or developed during the last fifty years. The great towns of Manchester, Wolverhampton, Bristol, Newcastle, Nottingham, Hull, and other such like towns, had, in fact, all been developed on one or other of the freehold systems. But even if the same system did prevail in the two countries, he denied that there was any parallel. The social and economic conditions in England were entirely different from those in Ireland. In the one there was a commercial community which had made, and was still making, enormous strides in population and in wealth; whilst in the other there was a country from which, by deliberate legislation, the Government had expelled industry, and in which in half a century they had reduced the population by one half. The result was, of course, that the artisans had less work and lower wages, and the shop keepers had just half as many customers. In England, moreover, the public had a safeguard in that excellent thing known as public opinion, which always restrained the landlord; but no such power existed in Ireland, where the landlord based his hope of Government support on his scorn and contempt for the opinions of the people from whom he drew his income. Or take Scotland. Some critics had the hardihood to refer to its people and its customs as "unspeakable," and to suggest that its laws were relics of barbarism; but its worst enemies could not deny that Scotland had a short and simple way of dealing with land sharks. There when a man desired to get land on which to erect a dwelling-house, with ground attached, or without it, he took what was called a feu, and if he was a vassal of the original holder it was in name only. The ground became his in perpetuity, and no one could wrest it from him or put a tax upon his industry.

The Bill which he now submitted to the House proposed to allow a tenant (1) right of making improvements and being allowed compensation for them; (2) to have a fair rent fixed; (3) to have his lease, at its expiration, renewed for a period of not less than that for which the holding was held under the expired lease, at a rent in default of an agreement, to be fixed by the County Court Judge; (4) to go before the Court in the case of a dispute with his landlord in regard to raising of the rents or capricious evictions; (5) and suggesting various amendments to the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, 1899. It could not be alleged, he thought, that these proposals were drastic or revolutionary. The County Court Judges in Ireland would not be accused of possessing extravagant prejudices against the landlords, for nearly all of them had been put where they were because they contested political elections in the landlords' interests. Moreover, the objects which the Bill had in view have been approved by Committees of this House. The Town Holdings Committee, in their final Report, recommended the principle of the Bill on the following grounds—

> "After the statements laid before us by various witnesses, we cannot doubt that the ownership by a working man of the house he occupies is one of the strongest inducements to those habits of life which make him a good citizen and a useful member of the community, and that this stimulus is more strongly felt in the case of a man who has or can obtain the freehold than in that of a lessee for a term of years."

Whilst Parliament should also bear in memory the recommendation of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes in their Supplementary Report, namely—

> "That legislation favourable to the acquisition on equitable terms of the freehold interest on the part of the leaseholder would conduce greatly to the improvement of the dwellings of the people of this country."

on the ground that—

> "The prevailing system of building leases is conducive to bad building, to deterioration of property towards the close of the lease, and to a want of interest on the part of the occupier in the house he inhabits."

and that—

> "The system of building on leasehold land is a great cause of the many evils connected with overcrowding, insanitary buildings, and excessive rents."

Some men had, it was urged, invested money in house property, and occupied to-day the position of middlemen; and it was said we should be careful to see that they obtained a fair return for the money they had invested. He absolutely accepted that proposition, but said that care should also be taken that the house-jobbers and the jerry-builders should not be allowed to grow rich at the cost of the poor, and that they should not be be permitted to accumulate wealth by dipping their hands in the tills of industrious tradesmen or in the pockets of hard-working artisans. House property as well as landed property had its duties as well as its rights, and until the holders were forced to do their duty to the community we could not hope to make headway with the housing of the poor or the better accommodation of the labouring classes. He hoped, therefore, that the House would assent to the Second Reading of this Bill, and allow it to go to a Committee upstairs, where its details could be discussed, and where such alterations could be made as might be found necessary. Any crank could criticise the phraseology of the Bill, but he and his friends were not wedded to every clause, and they were quite willing to agree to any amendments which it might be thought desirable to incorporate. He presumed, from the absence of the Chief Secretary, that the Attorney-General for Ireland would speak on behalf of the Government; and, if so, he hoped they might, for once, be favoured with a broad and statesmanlike pronouncement on the question of compensation for improvements, instead of the pettifogging analysis of a second-rate attorney. There was no danger of any legislation of this kind being either unjust or hasty, for after the Bill had avoided the Scylla of the Grand Committee it would have to face the Charybdis of this House again on the Report stage, and still again on the Third Reading. If it were fortunate enough to escape shipwreck there, it would afterwards have to go before another House, where, it was rumoured, the landlords were fairly well represented; and, as they had never been suspected of being negligent in the defence of their own interests, he thought the House might rest assured that there were abundant safeguards against injustice to the landlords. This was a Parliament of compromises, and in such a Parliament they could not hope to get all they were entitled to, but they did ask that they should receive at least an instalment of justice on this great national question. He hoped they should not have a repetition of the old, old story of English rule in Ireland—namely, the refusal of redress of a grievance until it had become dangerous to refuse it longer. They all knew, from the experience of history, the routine of Irish reform: first, the blank refusal, secondly, the public agitation and unrest, thirdly, the inevitable spell of coercion, and, finally, the reform. Delays were proverbially dangerous. It was an historical fact that when the Irish land question was first introduced in this House the only demand made was the modest one of compensation for disturbance. Justice was denied, and they knew the result. He hoped the Government would not repeat that experiment, and would not wait until the sand had begun to run down in the hour-glass of the ground landlords of Ireland.

If he had been present, he would have appealed to the Chief Secretary—whose general sympathy they recognised, and whose soft words and blarney they appreciated without being deceived by them—to break away on this occasion from the evil traditions of the office which he filled, and to allow, for once, the views of the Irish representatives to have some weight in the removal of a great grievance, which, so long as it remained unredressed, could not fail to largely nullify the efforts of all who were seeking to restore the industrial and commercial prosperity of Ireland and promote the comfort and happiness of its people. The British Parliament might give free education, might dump down light railways all over the land, might make technical schools as numerous as blackberries in the season, might exude cheap sympathy with industrial revivals; but unless they made the home a reality to the people they would not solve the social problem. The people of Ireland wanted to make the houses in their towns places fit to live in; to put a premium on honest labour instead of penalising it; to alter a system which aimed at making the rich richer and the poor poorer; and in the confidence that the Bill which he now proposed would do something towards achieving that consummation, he left it to the judgment of the House. It might be that the Government would accept it or they might reject it, and whichever way they decided their trusting majority, without listening to a word of the debate, would, when the division bells rang, troop into the lobby to support them; but the rejection of the Bill would not dispose of the question. It would come up again and again; and sooner or later—more probably sooner than later—it would, like every reform demanded by the Irish representatives in that House, find its place in the Statute-book. He was not without a hope that the Government would accept the Bill that day, and that they would decline to wait until delay had robbed the concession of all its grace.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway) said that in supporting the Motion for the Second Reading of this Bill, the object of which was to improve the position of tenants in towns in Ireland, and which had been so ably moved by his hon. friend the Member for South Down, he would use very few words. Around him were hon. Gentlemen who had consecrated to the study of this problem long years and very anxious thought. Never for a moment—even when engaged in the struggle for the settlement of other great and pressing questions, had they lost sight of the interests of town tenants. He would not stand in the way of their presenting to the House the important views which they had. It was admitted that legislation on this subject was necessary. It was one of actuality, and no better proof of this could be adduced than the long agitation which had existed to bring about an improvement, the meetings which had been held, the associations formed in every town in Ireland, the resolutions passed, and the determination in every quarter, that something must be done to put an end, once for all, to a most serious grievance. He maintained that not only was there a well-supported demand for legislation, but there was, as well, an absolute necessity for the same. He hoped, since the Irish Government had not taken the initiative in this matter, that they would at all events extend sufficient sympathy to enable this Bill to become law. The House was not dealing with a subject capable of arousing religious or political bitterness. Far from it. This Bill, which affected the well-being of the overwhelming majority of the masses of the cities and towns of Ireland, ought to commend itself to hon. Gentlemen from all quarters of the House. It went to the very root of much misery and discontent, and it proposed no small measure of relief and security. Roman Catholic and Protestant alike were interested in its fate, and both were bound to benefit by the provisions of the measure. It was not a question upon which Nationalists and Unionists could well hold different views, for the demand for this legislation came from the North and the South, from the East and the West; from those of every shade of political thought and religious view. If there was one feature more striking than another in this Bill, it was the extreme moderation of the demands made. When he contrasted the position of the town inhabitants of other countries with those of the town tenants of Ireland, he had the right to claim that this Bill was one of the most just and needful, one of the most temperate and moderate, ever presented to Parliament. Not only was the proprietor in many other countries obliged by law to carry out the improvements which he and his friends sought, but every protection was provided for the comfort and well-being of the occupier. He had seen the great labouring classes in many towns in other countries the absolute owners of their houses and the land on which they were built, with the natural result of the embellishment and interest in everything connected with them. They made their houses homes, sweet homes.

England's law had made Ireland a nation of tenants. It had taken the land from the people and had practically kept the people houseless and homeless. But it had never been able to extinguish the race. They were as much alive to-day as ever, and as fully determined to see everything wrong put right as at any period of their history. What they asked was that some protection, some security, should be given to the tenants in the towns of Ireland. In the constituency which he had the honour to represent the greatest interest was taken in this subject. There was a very considerable area of Galway city which was completely closed against the people, and the authorities were powerless to deal with the matter. What had happened? The city authorities were powerless to meet the difficulty. What happened? The difficulty was met in the most practical and patriotic way, not by any law passed by this House, but by an enlightened gentleman in the city, the Rev. Father Dooley. He recognised that there were many people in the city who could not get the houses and the homes they required. He borrowed a very considerable sum of money; and having secured a site he built quite a number of excellent modern houses on it which he gave to the artisan and labouring classes in Galway. The occupier paid an annuity—which incidentally he might observe was less than the rent he would otherwise have to pay—and at the end of twenty years the house became the absolute property of the occupier, the debt was extinguished, and he was glad to say no loss was incurred by the rev. gentleman who undertook this very noble and patriotic project.

He observed on the Notice Paper Motions for the rejection of this Bill. The Bill dealt with Ireland but did not apply to England and Scotland; and he thought that hon. Gentlemen who had tabled those Motions would be displaying a very gracious spirit if they allowed the Irish Members to carry the Bill at any rate into Committee. It was possible that the Bill was not drafted as well as every hon. Member would wish; but what Bill had ever been presented in the House which was not amended. Even Government Bills were susceptible to improvement; and as a matter of fact were improved as they went through the House. Hon. Gentlemen opposite did not perhaps understand the very great need of the legislation demanded in the Bill, and they should allow the measure to proceed to Committee, where the details would be fully and fairly considered. The Bill was a moderate one, its demands were fair and reasonable, and objection to any particular part of it could be taken in Committee. His hon. friend who moved the Second Reading made out a very fair and strong case for the Bill, the principles of which were compensation for improvements lawfully made by the tenant; the settlement of grievances which might arise between landlord and tenant by the Courts of the land, which were established by this Parliament and by Judges in whom the Government had confidence; to give greater security to the tenant than he now enjoyed; and finally to facilitate loans in certain cases. He begged to second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. MacVeagh.*)

MR. HERBERT ROBERTSON (Hackney, S.) said he wished to move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months, because he objected to its principle and not to any details in its drafting. He knew very well how difficult it was to frame a Bill; but there were two reasons why a Bill might be objectionable from a drafting point of view. One was the difficulty of drafting; and the other was where there was no clear idea in the mind of the draftsmen as to how effect would be given to its proposals. These were different objections to objections which might be urged in Committee. He ventured to suggest that the framer of the Bill had hardly realised its true effect. The hon. Gentleman who had just spoken said he desired the Bill because it would improve the towns; but from his knowledge of Irish or English towns he believed the Bill would materially injure them. The hon. Member for South Down said an argument in favour of the Bill was the system of short building leases. He was not called upon to defend the ninety-nine years system, but it certainly had the approval of an enormous number of people including both builders and purchasers of houses. He had in his mind a case where a man built a large number of houses and offered to sell them either on a long lease or as freehold. The price of the freehold was £850, £650 being the price of the lease. In nine cases out of ten the purchaser preferred to buy the lease, the reason being that he was able to produce the £650, but was either unable or unwilling to pay £850. The purchaser did not seem to care that at the end of ninety-nine years the property would pass away from him. It was very seldom indeed that houses of the working classes were now-a-days built so substantially that they would be very much use at the end of ninety-nine years. More than that, it was wise not to build too substantially because the requirements of the future would probably not be the same as the requirements of the present day. He himself lived in a house in Ireland that had been standing for many hundreds of years. It was not a business premises, and if it were it would not now be suitable for that purpose.

*MR. MACVEAGH asked if the hon. Member had the house on a short lease.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTSON said he had the house for ever, and therefore had no lease. It would not be to the interests of the working classes that houses should be built very substantially at an enormous cost, because that would make rents very much higher. On the whole, he believed that the working classes benefited by the short lease system, especially as they could not afford the price of a freehold. When houses were being built, in almost every case the landlord had to find the money, and he found it in one of two ways. He either built, himself, by contract, and then granted leases, or he let the land to a builder who put up the buildings on condition that he received a lease for ninety-nine years. But when the landlord did that, he almost invariably had to advance three-fourths of the money to the builder. Without that system there would not be so much building as there was in the neighbourhood of London, for instance. The Bill would put an end to that system in Ireland; but not a single word had been said to differentiate Ireland from England in this respect. The argument of hon. Members was in the main that the leasehold, system should be abolished, but they did not differentiate the case of Ireland from that of England. He should certainly object to the compulsory prohibition of a system which had been found to be of such great convenience, and he did not see why any differentiation should be made between Ireland and England in this matter.

The first clause corresponded with the Bill introduced in the year 1886, which was objected to by the then Chief Secretary for Ireland, and it did not appear to be directed so much to the length of the leases as to the improvements which might be made by a tenant. But if a tenant, who had a short tenancy, were allowed to get compensation for improvements made without the consent of the landlord, and which in the opinion of the landlord might not be considered improvements at all, it would certainly check the building of houses in the future. Under this Bill a man might be compelled to pay enormously for so-called improvements which he did not want, merely because the tenant chose to make them, and it must be remembered that the landlords were very often much worse off than their tenants, and they might be subjected to such charges by the tenants that they could not buy the tenant out. Was it to be said that because a tenant had made improvements he was to be left there for ever! If so, that was practically confiscating the landlord's property. The effect and intention of the second clause was to give the tenant a right to sell to somebody else to whom the landlord would be liable for the improvements made. Clause 3 dealt with future improvements to be made. Under this clause the landlord was not to have the right of objecting to such improvements. If he said he did not like the proposed improvement then he was to be taken to some Court which was to decide whether a tenant was to improve his landlord's property or not. Surely that could not be the intention of hon. Gentlemen opposite. Such a thing could not possibly be allowed. There was no reason why a man should be allowed to make alterations to another man's property. Clause 4 gave the mean landlord a claim over that of the superior landlord. With regard to this clause he would point out that in Ireland there were considerably more sub-leases granted than in England, and properties rose in that way to a very good rent indeed. Was this liability to be passed on right up to the man that had the head rent? Because if so it would have the effect of confiscating the first owner's property entirely. A further clause provided that no contract should be entered into between a landlord and a tenant which would deprive the tenant of his right to claim compensation under this Act. Let the House consider what that meant. It meant that a landlord would not dare to let his house on any tenancy whatever, because if a man took the house for two years only, directly he got possession he might say, "I want to make some improvements here, and if you don't like it you must come to the Court, which will say whether I may make them," or in other words, "you will have to compensate me for what I have done at the end of my tenancy." The provision for the fixing of fair rents, which was not in the Bill of 1886, was put in very vague terms, probably intentionally, but possibly because the scheme had not been thoroughly thought out, but the effect of that provision was that any man who became a tenant, if he became only a weekly tenant, could retain his tenancy for ever and have his rent fixed. Now it surely could not be contended that anybody who took a house might stay in it for ever, but if it was, was it likely that anyone in the future would build a house when he knew that directly he let it, on whatever terms he might let, the tenant would practically become his tenant in perpetuity? Such a state of things would discourage the whole of the building classes in Ireland, and while this would inflict an infinitesimal amount of harm on that class of landlords to which the hon. Member for South Down objected, it would do an enormous amount of injury to the ordinary, good landlords and tenants, and must, in the long run, ruin all the properties in the towns of Ireland. He begged to move.

*MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) said he should like to disabuse the mind of the mover of the Bill of any idea that in blocking the measure he had been animated by a general animosity towards Irish legislation. The hon. Member had inferred from the fact of his putting down a blocking Motion before he had obtained a printed copy of the Bill that he was opposed necessarily to all Irish measures; but he would like to remind him that he had always taken an interest in questions of this nature, and the issue of the Bill by the printers having been delayed, he naturally made a guess as to what its contents would be. He thought he made an excellent guess on this occasion; he guessed that the Bill would be the same as one introduced about two years ago, and his guess proved accurate, for it was precisely the same.

*MR. MACVEAGH said it was not the same.

*MR. KIMBER said that in all his experience in that House he had never had any difficulty with Irish Members, and he hoped that that would continue to be the case, and to infer from the circumstances which had just occurred that he was set against all Irish legislation was absurd. In fact, he wished to enlist the sympathy of the Irish Members in a grievance—an electoral grievance in which he was particularly interested, and he thought he would be acting most foolishly by opposing that or any other measure unless he could show good grounds for so doing. The hon. Member who had moved the rejection of the Bill had been resident in Ireland for some years, and he had had considerable experience of property there. Now he (the speaker) was opposing this Bill on grounds of principle, because he found that parts of these proposals were being applied, bit by bit, to the whole of the United Kingdom. It was a Bill, they were told, to remedy a grievance. But what was that grievance? He had listened to the speeches of both the mover and the seconder in order to ascertain what the grievance was, and who were the aggrieved parties. In all the instances hon. Members had cited they did not raise any question of the housing of the poor at all. The cases which they had put forward were the cases of well-to-do business men who must be presumed to have brains and a capacity for making contracts.

*MR. MACVEAGH said he did quote the case of a very poor tenant whose rent was £1 per year, which, at the expiry of the lease, was raised to £3, a very serious matter for a man of that class.

*MR. KIMBER suggested that the remedy applied in that case was almost absurd. It was to give a man who could not afford to pay a £3 rent the right to buy up the landlord's freehold. It was an insult to a poor man in such a position to give him such a power. But nearly all the cases cited by the hon. Member had to do with well-to-do business men. There was a case quoted of a miller who had taken a lease of some land and built a mill on it. Surely he was capable of doing business as well as the landowner, and in his experience the miller or the tradesman was much more likely to be able to get the benefit of such a contract than the landlord. The hon. Member did not tell them, as one of the ingredients of the contract, what were the terms of the lease of the land on which the house was built.

*MR MACVEAGH: I believe it was forty years.

*MR. KIMBER said it did not matter whether it was 40, 60, 100, or even only 10 years; the man entered into a contract, he was supposed to be capable of making a contract, and he deliberately agreed to do so. He was in the position, in fact, of forecasting what the possession of the land for forty years would enable him to do, and he came to the conclusion, apparently, that it would enable him to build the mill. He (Mr. Kimber) could tell the hon. Member that he had had considerable experience in dealing with property in this country, and he could assert without fear of contradiction that as between the freeholder and the building lessee, the latter nearly always got the best of the bargain. He made more money out of the contract than did the landlord. It was well known that the reversion of land leased at eighty years was not worth anything appreciable to the landlord until the lease had run out to less than fifty years, and then there was a reversionary value during the remainder of the term, but the lessee generally got 6 per cent. on his outlay, which yielded him 5 per cent. for interest and 1 per cent. for sinking fund, which paid off his principal in forty-one years, and gave him the rest of the term for nothing. So much, then, for the disadvantages which the building lessee was supposed to be under. The point was that the mill-owner entered into the contract with his eyes open. He was a free man, and presumably he only made the contract because he thought it was worth his while to do so.

*Mr. MACVEAGH: But what is the position of the mill-owner when his landlord practically owns the whole town? Has he freedom of contract?

*Mr. KIMBER said there were two parties to all contracts. The Bill suggested that the one who was hurt by having entered into the contract ought to be relieved by legislation; but if that were to become the duty of Parliament, the work of the House of Commons would never be completed. He would like to point out that considerable difficulties might arise from giving this power to purchase the freehold to only one of the parties to the contract. Why should not the landlord, who was the original owner, and in contact with whom the lessee might never have needed to come, have an equal power of buying out the lessee's interest? One of the curious consequences of the Bill would be that when once a man had become the tenant of a shop or a house, for however short a time, he could forcibly buy up the property of all the preceding owners, and even of other tenants who were on the same footing as himself. That was what he objected to on principle. The seconder of the Bill had given an interesting account of a Galway case in which a certain benevolent gentleman had been enabled to supply the want of houses without the help of an Act of Parliament.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN said he had mentioned that case in order to prove the absolute necessity which existed for a Bill of the present kind, and in stating that particular case he had pointed out that the owner of the property had had to borrow money in order to secure the improvements, and that he got no profit in return.

*Mr. KIMBER said that the main objection to the Bill was that it destroyed freedom of contract between men who were capable of doing business on equal terms, and took away the ability to maintain contracts when made. Freedom of contract was a leading principle of our law, and it was consecrated in the constitution of the American Union. In fact, it was so unalterable a term in the American Constitution that no law that was inconsistent with it could be passed. All sorts of evils followed any tampering with this principle. One set of men were given power to tyrannise over another set. What were the grievances to be remedied? What injury were the public suffering because A could not get property belonging to B? Was it good for society that A should be enabled to force B against his will to sell his property? The Legislature had adopted the principle that only for works of great public utility were compulsory powers of expropriation to be granted. Why should the House be asked to pass special legislation in favour of a very small, and that not a poor class of men, when there was no public end to be served? Moreover, the proposal would tend to recklessness of contract, and that was not to the benefit of any community in the world. He might multiply the objections to the Bill, but, as many others desired to speak, he would content himself by seconding the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Herbert Robertson.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*Mr. MOONEY (Dublin County, S.) said the hon. Member who had just spoken was the apostle of the gospel that the Irish people were over-represented in the House of Commons, but if that were the case, it was a curious fact that, when a Bill dealing exclusively with Ireland came up for consideration, the Opposition should come from such typical Irish constituencies as Tunbridge Wells, Hackney, Yarmouth, and Wandsworth. Here was a Bill dealing with a grievance which was not confined to one locality in Ireland, but was admitted in Ulster, Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, and it had to be brought to the English House of Commons, where its rejection was moved and seconded by Members from Hackney and

Wandsworth. The speech of the hon. and learned Member for Hackney was an attack not on the Bill, but on the building trade, for the whole argument was that a house could not be built to last through a ninty-nine years lease. The grievance in Ireland was that a landlord in Ireland was a different person altogether from an English landlord. In England in the majority of cases the rent paid to landlords simply covered with a slight profit, the interest on the money that such landlord, had spent upon the land or lands on the buildings thereon. In Ireland a landlord did not spend a single sixpence on the land; that was the point English Members failed to understand, as they were under the impression that the landland was simply getting the interest on the money he had spent. In Ireland the landlord originally obtained the land by confiscation or some other means; the land was let to a tenant; the farmer or shopkeeper who leased the land by his own ability and energy built up a goodwill in trade and some buildings. The landlord did not contribute a single penny, but at the end of the lease he was entitled to confiscate not only the buildings but the goodwill also. It was regrettable that, although this was really an Irish debate, the Chief Secretary had not found it convenient to attend. The promoters of the measure did not pretend that this was a perfect Bill. Doubtless the Attorney-General would be able to find in it many faults. But the Irish Party had not the advantage of two trained and well-paid legal advisers, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman would doubtless be able to recall recent cases in which the wording of certain Acts of Parliament for the legal clauses of which the Law Officers of the Crown were responsible had not been as lucid as it should have been. This was not a political, but an economic question, and should be dealt with as such and for this reason he especially regretted the absence of the Chief Secretary, who would undoubtedly reply in a less partisan spirit than the right hon. Gentlemen, the Attorney-General. He had in his possession a number of letters written by gentlemen in business in Kingstown, showing how they were affected by this grievance and he wished to state for the benefit of the Attorney-General that all the cases he would cite, were from letters sent by gentlemen who were not only his political supporters, but were his strong opponents. Men high in the councils of the Unionist Party. One case was when five acres of land was at a rental of £27 10s.; the present rental for a ninety-nine years lease of forty feet of the same land was £90, the increased value having been created not in any way by the landlord or his agent, but simply and solely by the energy and industry of the tenant. In another case a firm leased a piece of land at a heavy rental, intending to erect thereon buildings suitable for their business at a cost of £5,000, but they were simply told by the agent that, instead of buildings such as they required, they must erect buildings as directed by the landlord. Another letter was from a strong Unionist personally known to the right hon. Gentleman the Attorney-General who wrote—

> "Our position was that we had a house in Kingstown at £77 valuation, for which we paid a fairly nominal head rent. The Lords of the Soil suddenly increased it 30s. per foot frontage, which we have to pay, as otherwise he would have to go and so forfeit our goodwill. To give you a contrast the Lords of the Soil in the Pembroke Township (in the best part of Baggot Street) only charge at the rate of 15s. per foot. Our former valuation was £77 together with another house at £44 making a total of £121. The probability is that with the £5,000 or so we had to spend on the house our valuation will be doubled. So in addition to paying double Municipal Rates, we have to send double the money to the Imperial Treasury. Police and Bridge Tax go up, and no redress, or account of how the money is spent."

These were letters written by political opponents of his who had spent the best years of their lives in building up businesses, and who now, through no fault of their own, were placed in the position, possibly of ruining themselves by borrowing money to meet the exorbitant demands of the landlord. All that was asked for in this Bill was that the tenant might be compensated for any lawful improvement he made. They amply safeguarded the right of the landlord, and they asked that a fair rent might be fixed in the same way as was done in regard to the land. Objection had been taken to the provisions in regard to fixity of tenure, but they did not go so far as the law now in operation in Scotland, where the tenant paid a fixed rent which was never altered.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.) said he wished to put before the House the opinion which the Ulster Members had arrived at with regard to this Bill. They had come to the conclusion that it contained at least two very valuable principles which they felt bound to adopt and they should therefore support the Bill in the Division Lobby. Having said that he hoped he should be allowed to differ from some of the statements which had been made by previous speakers in the debate. He knew that the present system inflicted a good deal of hardship upon the town tenants in Kingstown and Black Rock, but he wished to deal with the smaller country towns in Ulster with which he was more familiar. While he was not going to make any objection to the drafting of the Bill, he thought the hon. Member for South Down had put the thing too broadly. He was afraid that when the Bill came to the Committee stage it would not be found possible to leave it in the power of a monthly or a weekly tenant to become an owner in perpetuity. In the hard case of the manufacturer which had been cited he was prepared to give relief, but if he had built 100 cottages for men in his employ and any of those men were discharged, it meant putting a tax upon that manufacturer to provide another fifty cottages, or whatever it might be. It was obvious that in cases like that, where the tenure was short, it would be impossible to give perpetuity because it was to the convenience of those tenants to have a short tenure, and this was also in the interest of the manufacturer who provided the cottages. His experience was that the majority of artisans preferred monthly or weekly lettings instead of a lease. The class most affected in the North of Ireland was the shopkeeping class, or what he would call the lower middle class. This was not a question of the artisan but a question affecting the shopkeeper more than any other class, who had felt the hardship in the past, and who felt it at the present time, and these were the people who were pressing upon Unionist Members the desirability of a proper and legitimate reform in his matter. With regard to houses in the North of Ireland, there were very few landlords who would not be pleased to get good tenants, and they would be quite ready to give a lease of ninety-nine years. The old houses were let generally by the lord of the soil, and he received about 1 per cent. of the rent for ever, but he had no concern with the betterment of the town. It amounted to this, that, in the case of old houses in Ulster towns, the landlord affected by this Bill would be another middle-class retired shopkeeper or present shopkeeper. It was not a question of legislating for one class, because it was the same class in the old houses as in the others.

This was a social and economic question, and it ought not to be prejudiced by considerations of landlords against tenants when both parties were absolutely in the same class. They regarded those affected by this Bill as divided into two classes, the yearly tenant and the leaseholder. They regarded it as right that the yearly tenant should be encouraged to make improvements and receive compensation for them, and it was provided in Section 3 that the yearly tenant might do so. It was in the interests of the town and of everybody else that the premises should be developed in that way. But the fair way—and it was a fair way—in which Section 3 was drawn provided that before a tenant could do this in a case happening after the passing of this Act, he must give notice to the landlord, and its reasonableness be determined by the Court. Looking at the matter as impartially as he could, he did not think it would be fair to insist on compensation being given for improvements which had already been carried out without notice to the landlord, and which had been carried out under the existing law, under which all parties knew they made improvements at their own risk. Therefore, while he should be glad to support Section 3, he did not know that his own friends would he prepared to support the Bill with regard to retrospective improvements. He would not consent to the proposal to make a fair rent Court in a town. That seemed to him to be an absolutely unworkable proposal. They could make a fair rent Court in the country, because they could ascertain the amount of improvements which the tenant had made. In a town the value of a house depended on entirely different considerations. A house might be near a post office. The post office was built by somebody else. What third parties did in the neighbourhood was an important element in the value of a house. It seemed impossible to lay down any principle by which a fair rent could be arrived at for a house in a town beyond the actual value for the building material. He was not aware of any claim or public voice on behalf of the tenants to have their rents fixed. They wanted their perpetuity and compensation for improvements, but there was hardly a man who was not content to go on paying his present rent if he only had fixity of tenure.

In a Bill which was introduced in the last Parliament there was a provision that the extension in perpetuity should only apply in the case of those leases which had fifteen years to run unexpired. That limitation was dropped here, but personally he did not think it mattered. He thought it would be a very desirable thing that in town houses they should carry further the principle adopted as far back as 1854 by the renewal of the Leasehold Conversion Act, which gave power to settle the rent and fix it in perpetuity. He thought it would be an exceedingly satisfactory solution of the question. They would thus get out of all difficulties about improvements, because when a man had premises of his own there would be no question of compensation. Section 12 was a very important provision which was to apply the provisions of the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Acts—

> "To any estate whether mainly agricultural or pastoral, provided such estate formed portion of a town or village the population of which did not exceed 3,000 persons."

The Act was very short but very useful. With regard to land legislation they had the Act of 1860, the Act of 1870, and then the Act of 1881, all of which sought to fix fair rents, and they had had a Purchase Act since. He had no objection to Section 12 of the present Bill if it were explained where the money was to come from. There was no object in letting the tenants in to purchase unless they provided the wherewithal. Was it intended that the £12,000,000 voted in the last session were to be taken and diverted from their original purpose? The hon. Member had provided no funds to make his Bill workable in addition to those which had already been voted. He regretted it because it seemed to make the Bill a little illusory. In conclusion, he would say that, on the lines he had indicated all Irish opinion was in unison. He had no doubt that hon. Members on the Nationalist Benches would rather accept the three-quarters of a loaf which he had suggested than be deprived of the whole loaf which they desired. The argument which had been relied on by the hon. Member for Hackney was that the interests of town tenants in Ireland and the interests of town tenants in England were identical, and that it would be unsafe to legislate for Ireland before the Government were prepared to legislate for England. But again and again they had been informed by the Government that the desire was to legislate in Ireland when Irishmen of all shades of opinion were found in harmony. Again, legislation had been tried in Ireland which they had never tried in England, and he thought this was an occasion when, considering what had been done for the residents upon Irish agricultural land by giving them a special code of legislation and special advantages which had never been tried in England, something should be done for their fellows in the towns. He believed that his views and those expressed by his colleagues were absolutely safe and fair, and he hoped that the Government, when its representative came to reply, would consent to the Bill going to Committee, or, if not, that they would at least give an assurance that, in the near future, legislation on some such lines, with the consent of Irish Members, would be adopted.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) said that as an English Member he wished to express his hearty approval of the Bill, which was very much on the lines of the Bills he and his hon. friends had introduced in previous sessions. Every one who wished well to Ireland, and who had listened to the speech of the hon. Member for Antrim, must believe that the Government ought to give favourable consideration to the Bill seeing that there was agreement of every section of Irish opinion upon it. Any objection that might be taken to some of the details could be easily dealt with in Committee upstairs. He had listened with amazement to the speeches of the hon. Gentlemen who opposed the Bill, the principle of which was very simple and ought to be carried out by all friends of the future development not only of Ireland but of England and Scotland. That principle was, that a man who made an improvement should not be deprived of the benefit of it by the law of the land. The hon. Member for South Down had referred to the Select Committee on Town Holdings on which he sat several years ago, but he had omitted to notice the most material point in the recommendations of that Committee, viz., that improvements made on premises, for trade purposes, which added to the value of the holding should be compensated for at the end of the lease or tenancy. The motive of the speech of the hon. Member for Wandsworth was perfectly plain. They all knew that there was an enormous hostility on the part of the great landlords in England and Scotland to the extension of the principle contained in the Bill to the leasehold estates in towns. That was the real motive of the opposition to the Bill. He did not agree with the hon. Member for South Down as to the absolute distinction between the Irish and the English case. The root evil was absolutely the same in both countries. The Market Gardens Act of 1895 not only admitted the full rights of the tenant to execute such improvements as were likely to add to the value of the land, but gave compensation retrospectively where the tenants had carried out the improvements. That fact, and the recommendation of the Select Committee to which he had referred, should have weight with hon. Members in coming to a decision to support the Bill. He did not profess to understand all its details, but the principle was the same everywhere. Under the existing law the more a man improved his premises for the purpose of advancing his business, the more he was at the mercy of the landlord, and the more the landlord was able to confiscate the improvements the tenant had made. He hoped the Bill would be accepted, and he trusted that it would be the forerunner of legislation on similar lines for England and Scotland.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said that some of the most startling doctrines he had ever heard in his life had been enunciated in the course of the discussion. It was a case of "Heads I win, tails you lose." The hon. Member who moved the Second Reading of the Bill had suggested that the landlord and tenant should meet and fix the rent of the holding in perpetuity. That might be an excellent arrangement for the tenant, but it would be an extremely bad arrangement for the landlord. It would be practically compulsory purchase, without finding any money. Nothing was more calculated to prevent capital from going to Ireland than legislation of this sort. The hon. Member opposite had expressed dissatisfaction that English Members should oppose Irish Bills of this kind. The hon. Gentleman seemed to think that English Members had no interest in Irish matters. He begged to differ. Irish Members were not so keen on that point when they asked English Members last session for £100,000,000 for land purchase, or a grant of £20,000,000 or £30,000,000 in order to rectify bad legislation. He would have thought that the principle of fair rents had been so utterly discredited that nobody would have had the hardihood to get up and suggest that such legislation should be introduced. He wished to call attention to the fact that the Second Reading of the Town Holdings Bill was opposed by Mr. Gladstone in 1886. A Select Committee on the subject was appointed, and in 1889 they condemned the proposals in the Bill by a majority of twelve to seven. He understood the proposals in the present Bill were exactly identical with those in the Town Holdings Bill. The Select Committee in their Report pointed out that there was no analogy between the Agricultural Holdings Act and that particular Bill.

Mr. CHANNING said that the Agricultural Holdings Act was passed six years after that Select Committee sat.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY said that they had passed a good many bad

Acts in that House, though he always did his best to prevent it.

MR. CHANNING: It was moved by a Conservative.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY said that not even the Conservative Party was immaculate. He opposed the Bill because he thought it was right that the views of those who held that the principle of it was sheer confiscation should be put before the House. The hon. Member for South Down seemed to think that the Bill ought to pass because the land in Ireland was originally got by confiscation; but supposing that were correct, two blacks did not make a white, and there was no reason why, in a more civilised and sensible age, they should revert to the practice of bygone generations. He opposed the Bill for another reason, viz., once this sort of Bill was passed for Ireland, the same principle would be extended to England. They in England were desirous for the prosperity of their country, and that capital should be encouraged to come here and remain here. The result of all legislation of this kind was to retard improvement. Some of the provisions of the Bill were so extraordinary that he really believed he could talk an hour upon it. He, however, did not intend to do that, because the Bill was so bad and so ludicrous that there was not the slightest chance of the House giving it a Second Reading. He wished to draw attention to a particular clause—that which provided that the tenant should be compensated, not for improvements he himself had made, but for improvements his predecessor had made. To give a man compensation for something that he had never had anything to do with was extraordinary. He felt so certain that legislation of this kind was detrimental to the best interests of the country that he would oppose it to the utmost.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said he congratulated the House on the unexpected treasure it possessed in the hon. Baronet, who had told them that he could talk for an hour. In view of this fact he thought it was to be greatly regretted that in the rearrangement of the Government he was not made Chancellor of the Exchequer, because he noticed that there was difficulty in getting the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say anything in the House on the fiscal question or anything else. Since last they addressed themselves to this question in 1886, when Mr. Crilly's moderate Bill was introduced, considerable disadvantage had accrued to the town tenants of Ireland by reason of the legislation of this House. They had for many years suggested the amendment of the Grand Jury Laws, but when, in 1888, after nearly half a century of struggle, that reform was conceded, it was only conceded by laying upon the tenant a burden which had no connection with the real grievance that was being redressed; without rhyme or reason the town tenants had placed upon their shoulders in 1886 the entire rates which had hitherto been borne by the landlords. Then the readjustment which the Local Government Act granted, perhaps it was worth a penny or twopence in the month in the case of tenants under £4 per year, had worked a grievance and a very great hardship indeed; and in many cases it had worked the disfranchisement of these tenants, and whole groups of labourers in small towns of Ireland had lost their local government franchise and Parliamentary franchise because of that enactment throwing the rates upon them. In fact, in many cases it was no longer worth the while of the county council to attempt to collect the rates of these men. Therefore, without rhyme or reason they had placed a burden upon these town tenants for which no return whatever had been given, so that the result of legislation in Ireland was that they had absolutely relieved the landlord class of Ireland, not merely in the country but in the towns, of all liability for local rates. It did not necessarily follow that they would have to pursue similar legislation in England; and he could quite understand English Members asserting that what they were seeking for here might not necessarily be of advantage in England, for the position of the English landlords was not comparable with that of the Irish landlord, who never probably saw the town he owned, and who cared for nothing but the quarterly or yearly cheque he got from his agent and spent in England, who cared no more what went on in the town than he did for what went on in Japan. He was very much struck with what he saw the other day in visiting Navan. Mr. McCann, whose death every Member of the House greatly deplored, had just bought nearly the whole town from Lord Russell, and he had built a factory there of the most valuable kind, giving work to scores of artisans, and the indirect effect of which was enormous. He could not help thinking if the landlords of Ireland for the last 700 years had made their incomes a blessing to the inhabitants of the towns they owned, as Mr. McCann was trying to do when he died, what a different Ireland there would be. There was not a man owning a single house or a single property in Ireland who really had got to any real extent that home feeling, that patriotic feeling—perhaps he should call it parochial feeling—in relation to his tenants which no doubt English landlords had, and which prevented those evils which were a curse to Ireland.

The Bill had been promoted on that side of the House, and it had been supported by the Member for North Antrim on behalf of the entire Unionist and Orange Party for the North of Ireland, including the right hon. Member for North Armagh, so that, as far as Ireland was concerned, all representatives, Unionists and Nationalists, landlords and tenant, except for the official voice which they had not yet heard, and perhaps also the voice of Trinity College, were united in favour of some such legislation. It was very easy to speak as that hon. Member who had just sat down had spoken. He himself treated Bills proposed by private Members as merely sketches or dummies. The Second Reading debate of a private Member's Bill ought to be regarded in the same way as a debate on a Motion. As a Legislature this House was merely a farce so far as Ireland was concerned. They had accorded them the dignified opportunity of debate on two or three Fridays, but, so far from considering this Bill as a vital root on which they could graft effective legislation, they all knew it would never take effect in law. Even if it went to a Select Committee, it would go no further, unless the Government gave it its assistance, and even then it would be killed in the slaughter-house across the Lobby. Therefore, they did not need to engage themselves in criticising the details of the Bill. The first question to be considered was whether there was a grievance to be remedied. Would anyone contend that the state of the town tenants question in Ireland, regarded from the point of view of the labourer, the artisan, or the shopkeeper, or even the landlords themselves, was in a perfect or even a decent condition? He remembered in 1886, when Lord De Vesci or Lord Longford, he did not know which, in the Kingstown case, was brought before this House, and the Prime Minister was a member of the Select Committee, Mr. Stewart was examined, and his excuse was that Lord De Vesci was a tenant for life and could not give a long lease, unless he had an Act of Parliament. So they had this grievance, that this was not only a tenants, but to a considerable extent a landlords grievance also, because landlords were in many instances unable to give long leases, which in many cases they said they desired to do. He was therefore far from supposing that the Government contended that the situation, so far as town holdings were concerned in Ireland, was satisfactory.

Was there to be no attempt made to remedy it? The Bill of 1886 was a moderate Bill. It simply proposed to extend the law of compensation as applied to agricultural districts to towns and houses. Was that a severe measure? Was that confiscation? Why was it confiscation if a tenant made improvements perhaps doubling the value of his house to suppose that the tenant should not be turned out at the end of his lease without getting something? Surely even Conservative Members must admit there was nothing confiscatory in that policy. He did not say of course, that the suggestion to fix a fair rent of these town holdings would in all cases be satisfactory. He thought it would be a mere absurdity to offer a labourer the power to go into the Court to decide whether his rent should be 1s. or 1s. 6d. a week. But what was the grievance of these labourers and artisans in these towns? The fact was they could not get houses with which to cover their heads. They could not get them. It was not a question of tenure with them; it was a question of getting the houses, and why could they not get the houses? First of all it was because the landlords would not give sites for them without compulsion; and secondly, because if they did give them they gave such ridiculous tenures that no speculator would build upon them. Who would lay out in thirty-one or sixty years leases, not to speak of ninety-nine years leases? Who would lay out the capital? Why did not capital come into the country? The want of artisans' dwellings existed, but the capital did not flow into the country simply because the landlords would not themselves build and would not allow others to do so for them, the tenures they suggested being too absurd and impossible. He respectfully asked the Government to declare that the condition of affairs with regard to these town tenants was unsatisfactory. Of course, there was the shopkeepers' grievance in Ireland as in England, but this was a question which need not necessarily be gone into deeply to-day. It was a very great hardship on the shopkeeper when he had made his business valuable, whether in Grafton Street in Dublin or the Strand in London, that he should be turned out at the end of his lease. His own opinion was that the democracy in England would yet exact reform, whether it was from a Conservative or a Liberal Government, and that Ireland would share in the reform *pari passu* with England. He appealed to the Government to address themselves with candid minds towards the question. It was not to be solved merely by a Labourers or an Artisans Dwellings Act. This was a grievance of an enormous kind, leading to the decay of towns, insanitary holdings, unhealthy conditions, and practically to emigration. In nearly the whole of the Irish towns they could not get decent houses to go into, because there was no site upon which to build them, and builders would not build on the tenures offered.

The hon. Gentleman who proposed this Bill gave them the case of Belfast. That was a remarkable case. It had been referred to in that House historically for the last forty or fifty years. The fact that Belfast had thriven was due to the fact that the Marquess of Donegall had been forced to grant long leases and so encourage the industry which he was happy to see had grown up. This was a grievance which had led to the decay of towns in Ireland, to the insanitary conditions which existed in Ireland, and to emigration. This grievance was solely due to the fact that foolish landlords living in England had been solely in the hands of Irish agents who took a short-sighted and narrow view of the situation, and did not give the more equitable terms which would be granted in this country, and without which no decent dwellings could be erected. Therefore, without committing himself to all the propositions laid down in this Bill, he should vote for it on the sole ground that some legislation was necessary, and that the Government had proposed none; and until they did every person in that House who desired that grievance to be remedied was entitled to vote for any reform that was proposed.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) said he was glad to hear from the hon. and learned Gentleman the business-like statement that there was no use in offering a fair rent Court to a tenant paying 1s. or 1s. 6d. a week. That was what the Bill would do. It appeared to him that the Bill was really a Bill to apply the Act of 1881 to towns. Every hon. Member should remember that the House spent the greater part of last session over a Bill which involved large financial transactions. He was glad to support that Bill in order to escape from the economic confusion occasioned by the Act of 1881 as applied to agricultural land. Having applied the principle to agricultural land in Ireland, it was found, after twenty years experience, that it produced such a state of chaos that it was necessary to adopt heroic measures involving considerable financial responsibility in order to escape from the position which had been created. From that point of view he was justified in contending that the House should not put the towns in Ireland in the same state of economic chaos that the Act of 1881 produced in the agricultural districts. On that broad ground he opposed the Bill. The hon.

and learned Gentleman referred to landlords living away from their property. He himself had represented Bow, and the great landlord there lived in Wales. There was no argument to be based on where a landlord lived. The hon. Member who introduced the Bill referred to the case of Blarney. He instanced the case of a mill-owner who established a great industry there which was now of world wide fame. It was necessary for him to provide accommodation for his employees. The hon. Member stated that the mill-owner entered into a contract with the landlord for a forty years lease, and he drew a harrowing picture of the position of the mill-owner when that period had expired The hon. Member gave that as an example in favour of passing this Bill, but the mill-owner entered deliberately into the contract. The hon Member said that at the end of forty years the mill-owner would be at the mercy of the landlord. But was that so? He did not think it was. A very considerable village had grown up in Blarney, and he wished to give all honour to the mill proprietor for the houses he built for his employees, and for the way in which he looked after them. He had the greatest respect and admiration for the mill-owner, but when the forty years had expired was there nothing to compel the landlord to be reasonable? He thought there was. How was he to dispose of his houses?

*MR. MACVEAGH said the landlord could treble or quadruple the rent.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB said his point was that a great number of houses had been built under the forty years lease, and that the mill-owner would not be at the mercy of the landlord at the end of the period, because there would be no demand for the houses except as habitations for the mill employees. Surely, therefore, it was to the mutual interest of the mill-owner and the landlord to arrive at a reasonable arrangement. This was a Bill which, after their experience of Ireland, this House should not pass. If there was to be legislation altering the existing rights of house property, it ought to be applicable to the United Kingdom generally, and not confined to any particular part of it. He opposed the Bill because it would be unjust and unwise to take the steps it proposed. The difficulty in Ireland was caused by the fact that there were too many middlemen. In England, in most cases, the landlord kept direct control; but in Ireland there were frequently half a dozen middlemen, every one of whom made a profit, and the last middleman had such a little margin left that he screwed up the poorest class of tenant, who were really treated like dogs. The Bill would not remedy that grievance. It would affect the well-to-do class. Supposing a South African millionaire returned home and rented a mansion in Merrion Square, he could turn the stables into a ballroom, call it an improvement, and make the landlord pay for it. The Bill would merely benefit a class which was not deserving of the special consideration of the House; and he thought he had shown sufficient reasons why it should be rejected.

MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) said he desired to express the hope that the Government would see their way to assent to the Second Reading of the Bill. Even the hon. Baronet the Member for Peckham admitted that the Bill was of the greatest importance. The hon. and gallant Baronet who had just spoken talked of the economic chaos which the Bill would introduce into Ireland. The hon. Member who had travelled over many parts, must have been struck with the decay and misery that existed in many cases just outside and round the great towns of Ireland. This Bill was to try and stop this decay. It was said that this Bill if passed would interfere with contracts, but hon. Members who relied on that argument forgot that the legislation for England and Ireland had always run in different grooves, and that in Ireland the principle had been recognised that for the public good private interests must give way. It was absurd to argue that it was objectionable because it interfered with contract; the whole code of land laws for Ireland interfered with contract, but without the Land Acts, Ireland would be more miserable than she was at present. The hon. and gallant Member did not seem to have read the Bill with any degree of accuracy. He spoke of a South African millionaire renting a house in Merrion Square and adding a ball-room to that house, and then claiming compensation. This Bill only said that a tenant was to get compensation for improvements that added to the value of the holding. Surely if the ball-room added to the value of the house it was only right that the tenant should get compensation for that improvement, but if it did not add to the value of the holding then he was to have no compensation at all. It was with great pleasure that he heard the hon. Member for Antrim boldly stand up in favour of this measure. That enabled him to say that all the Irish Members of this House, save the law officers of the Crown, were in favour of the principle underlying this measure, which was brought in in the hope that it might do something to revive the wretched and decaying villages and towns in Ireland. Was nothing to be done now to try and improve that condition of things? This Bill went in the direction of encouraging the tenants to improve their holdings and obtain that security which had already been given to the occupiers of agricultural holdings, which insured that all they spent in improvements would not be lost. He approved of this Bill because it enabled the tenants to improve their homes, and enabled them to say, "Those who sow shall reap." The principle that everything put into the soil belonged to the landlord was an obsolete principle, and one of the last surviving rags of feudalism, and, in his opinion, every improvement made, whether in a town house or the country, should entitle those who made it to adequate compensation when they left. He also approved of the Bill because it did away with the injustice of the present law. In many parts of Dublin there were houses falling into decay which the landlords could not or would not repair, and which people would not take because the landlords would not reduce the rents. They were not prepared to take houses at a high rent, re-roof them, and repair them, put in modern appliances and bring them up to date without some security that the expenditure thus entailed would be returned to them. That applied to all tenants throughout Ireland. Turning to the clause affecting fair rents he could not see why, if under the Land Acts an agricultural tenant had a right to have a fair rent fixed to his holding, a town tenant should not have the same right. There was no reason in principle or equity why a distinction should be made between them, and in that regard this Bill only provided for extending the principles of the Land Acts already in existence. This Bill set up an admirable tribunal to ascertain the value of the improvements and also the fixing of fair rents. That tribunal was to be the County Court Judge, whose time was altogether at the disposal of the Government, and who was familiar with the locality in which he was judge, and two assessors, one appointed by each of the interested parties. He could not conceive a more fair or admirable tribunal for ascertaining the amount of compensation or for fixing the rents. Hon. Members opposite had often shown their sympathy for these decaying towns and villages, and he hoped now, when an opportunity was given to them to carry out those wishes and put into practice those professions they had often made upon public platforms by the introduction of a measure of this simple character, they would take advantage of that opportunity and sanction the Second Reading of this Bill.

*Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.) expressed the opinion that it was most unfair that, when a shopkeeper in his endeavour to improve his business had added to the letting value of his holding by making improvements to it, upon the expiration of his tenancy the landlord should be able to demand a higher rent from him than that which he originally paid, simply on account of the improvements for which he himself had been responsible. In other words, it was most unfair that a landlord should have power to confiscate his tenant's improvements. Nothing could be more unfair than that the tenant, on his refusal to pay the increased rent, should be compelled to quit his holding without compensation for the improvements he had made. One of the principal aims of this Bill was to remedy that injustice. The first clause provided that a tenant might, on quitting his holding, claim compensation for improvements made by him or by his predecessor in title, which had added to the letting value. In event of a dispute between the landlord and tenant with regard to such a claim, such dispute, unless the parties agreed to leave the matter to arbitration, was to be decided by the County Court Judge and two assessors, which tribunal had the power to take into consideration the rent of the holding and also any benefits the tenant may have received from the landlord in consideration of such improvements. That was the basis on which the Bill was framed, and nothing could be fairer. Under this Bill, if a tenant desired to make improvements he must give notice in writing to his landlord of his intention. If the landlord objected within a month of the service of such notice, then the tenant could go to the Court, which could sanction any or all of the improvements. Nothing could be fairer than that, and if this Bill was passed into law many people who held under short leases would make improvements which they would not contemplate making under the present law. There were other clauses in the Bill to his mind equally as important, notably the clause dealing with the fixing of fair rents, which if hon. Members would read they would see were just and moderate. Another part of the Bill was the part dealing with the question of purchase. He was strongly of the opinion that town tenants should acquire the right to purchase their holdings, just the same as the agricultural tenant, especially since under the Land Act of last year where a village or town was comprised in an estate which was principally agricultural or pastoral and where that estate was being sold the tenants in such towns and villages could purchase their holdings. That being now the law he failed to see why the tenants in towns, on an estate which was not agricultural or pastoral, should not acquire the same right. Recently a case was brought under his notice where the landlord of a small estate, not agricultural or pastoral, but consisting of groundrents with small plots of land, offered to sell to his tenants and the tenants were most anxious to buy if they could get the money from the Government on the same terms as the farmers under the Land Act of 1903. It was to meet such cases that Clause 12 was inserted in this Bill. In their case the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act 1899 would not apply, because there were licensed premises on the estate and the tenant of such premises would not get an advance under that Act to purchase his holdings. There were also tenants of small plots of land on the estate who were not town tenants, so that he was right in saying the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act would not apply. With the extension of the provisions of that Act he was entirely in accord, because he believed the acquisition of their dwellings would be an incentive to industry to the people of Ireland, who would then feel that they had something to work for. He pointed out that the question of the town tenants, now that the land question was about to be settled, would, if it were not dealt with, very soon make itself felt. Already the town tenants were forming branches of the Town Tenants' League and holding meetings and bringing their grievances before those who represented them in Parliament, and, in his opinion, the sooner the Government realised that this question would have to be dealt with, the better it would be for their administration in Ireland. He, therefore, trusted that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary or his colleague the Attorney-General, whichever of them replied on behalf of the Government, would not take up a *non possumus* attitude with regard to the Bill, but give it the consideration it deserved; and he trusted that hon. Members representing English, Welsh, and Scotch constituencies, having regard to the fact that this Bill was approved by every Irish Member in the House, would recognise the reasonableness of their claims and would give the Bill their support on the division.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said the hon. Member for South Down might congratulate himself, if not upon the Second Reading of the Bill, on the discussion that had taken place and the hopeful tone of the debate. They had had presented to the House the family-lawyer point of view in opposition to the Bill. That point of view was simply the question of property—property belonging to one class and that class clinging desperately to it, right or wrong. In addition to that, they had had a statement from the hon. Member for North Antrim, a statement not made by the hon. Member in his personal capacity, but in the capacity of the deputy leader of the Ulster official Unionist Party, that they would support the Bill. The hon. and learned Gentleman had an official connection with the Chief Secretary, and he could hardly imagine that the private secretary to the Chief Secretary would oppose the policy of his chief. He therefore gathered that the line taken by the hon. Member for North Antrim indicated the line that was to be adopted by the Government. They had this extraordinary feature also in the present debate. Every Irish Member in the House who had risen to speak had supported the principle of the Bill and the opposition to it was left to the Members for Wandsworth, Hackney, Peckham, and Yarmouth. That was not a rare occurrence in the House. During the last twenty years he had seen the same thing over and over again, and the result had been, in many cases, that the measures thus opposed only by English Members and supported by all sections of Irish Members had found their way into the Statute-book of the realm, nobody being any the worse and everybody a great deal better for it. The hon. and gallant Member for Yarmouth said that the Bill proposed to apply the principles of the Land Act of 1881, which had created confusion in Ireland, to the towns. He was aware that the hon. and gallant Gentleman wished to get rid of that Act, but he believed that that Act saved Ireland from great disaster and was absolutely necessary, and that if it had had fair play and had been more generously worked it would have gone far to settle the Irish land question. The people of Ireland regarded the present position of tenants in towns as inequitable and unfair, and they meant to put an end to it if Parliamentary institutions could do it. He had in his mind the licensing cases which were heard before the Kingstown Bench recently. Applications were made for transfers of licences. What was the position of the applicants. Their leases were expiring; either they or their predecessors had built the houses in which the businesses were carried on. The landlords—Lords Longford and De Vesci—had not laid one brick on another; had not spent a penny on the property, yet they insisted on the applicants rebuilding the houses — which were many of them in a fair condition to his knowledge — and actually increased the rents on the tenants' own improvements. It might be said that the tenants could have gone elsewhere. So they could, but they could not have taken their businesses with them, and so they had to comply with the landlords' terms. This was all right according to the family lawyer, but after all why should men reap where they had not sown?

There were two things which it was absolutely necessary for the House to bear in mind. First, that the tenant's lawful expenditure ought to be protected, and that no man should be able to appropriate it. He knew that was *anathema maranatha* to the family lawyer, but they had nothing to do with the family lawyer. The second point was that on the fall of a lease confiscation of the tenant's property should not be permitted. These were the two main points of the Bill. All other matters were for consideration in Committee, and he hoped the Government would lend a willing ear, if not to the whole Bill, at all events to those two principles. Everyone who knew the Chief Secretary and the Attorney-General for Ireland knew perfectly well that they desired the true welfare of Ireland. They had done much for the land, though they would have to do a little more, and they knew perfectly well that, apart from the land, the great landless masses were living, in many cases, in what he could only call a horrible condition. Let them to-day send a ray of hope to the towns and villages of Ireland, to show that they were not for ever to be neglected, and he believed the Irish people would not be ungrateful.

Mr. McKEAN (Monaghan, S.) thought it augured well for the future prospects of the Bill that the only opponents had been the hon. Members for Wandsworth, Hackney, Peckham, and Yarmouth, and the arguments against the Bill might be crystallised in one, viz., a belief in the sanctity of contract. They were told that a bargain was a bargain, and had Shylock been alive to-day he would have rejoiced at the declarations of opinion to which the House had been listening. The old fallacies, exploded time and again in that House, had been once more advanced by the opponents of the Bill. What was the position to-day? The Bill dealt with a grievance of a most urgent character. That had been admitted by hon. Members on every side. It was moderate in its character. It contained nothing subversive of the rights of property. It sought to do something for a class almost entirely neglected by Parliament, the class of small shopkeepers in Ireland. The Legislature had already set its seal upon every principle and clause in the Bill in the land legislation it had passed for Ireland. Let them take the case of the leaseholders. The law with regard to them was a disgrace to England and to civilisation, it was nothing but robbery legalised. The landlords under it imposed impossible and even grotesque conditions before granting renewals of leases. One tenant was called upon at Kingstown to rebuild his house and erect a weathercock over it at a cost of £12; another licensed trader was compelled to put a dome over his building like that of St. Paul's Cathedral on a small scale. Surely it was time the Legislature did something to remedy that disgraceful condition of affairs. Now if a young man took a house at £20 a year, and by his business ability and energy created a good and prosperous business he was liable to have his rent increased year after year. Surely that required remedying. Compensation for improvements was one of the best established principles of English jurisprudence, and he would like to know what argument the Attorney-General had to advance against its application to Ireland. What course did the Government propose to take. Would they assume the old hopeless, helpless, can-do-nothing attitude, or would they come forward with a statesmanlike scheme of their own. Of course they could not expect heroic measures from the Government, except on behalf of the Irish landlords or the mine-owners of South Africa, but he reminded them that the sand in their hour glass was rapidly running out, and the only way to secure a new lease of power was by introducing great reforms.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.) said that the hon. Member who moved the Second Reading of the Bill

was good enough to state that he rather expected from the representative of the Government narrow and captious criticism on the phraseology of the measure. But his apprehension in that respect was altogether unfounded, for it was not his habit, neither was it his desire, so to treat private Members' Bills on any occasion. As he understood the Bill, it meant to apply the legislation which already existed in Ireland with regard to agricultural land in all forms, to houses in towns. It meant to apply to houses in towns, no matter what class of houses, first, the legislation dealing with improvements; secondly, the legislation fixing fair rents; and, thirdly, the special provision of what was called the renewal clause. It was said that if the Bill was passed it would do two things—it would improve the houses of the working classes, and it would promote the prosperity of Ireland and secure the granting of building leases. So far from improving the houses of the working classes, it would, in his opinion, defeat that object. A similar Bill was introduced a few years ago by the hon. Member for the St. Patrick Division, who himself subsequently admitted that it would not effect that object.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I have no recollection of ever having given voice to any such suggestion either in this House or elsewhere.

MR. ATKINSON said he was sorry if he had done the hon. Member an injustice, but at any rate it was his contention that the Bill would not improve the houses of the working classes, and he would tell the House why. The difficulty was to build houses to let at rents which the artisan could afford to pay. It never could be done by the individual effort of artisans. It was absurd to talk of the man earning £1 a week spending his little capital in improving another man's house. The only way of effecting that object was by municipal action or by encouraging capitalists to build with the object of making a profitable investment, while securing to the working classes accommodation at a price they could afford to pay. The only security to the man who built houses for the working classes was the power to turn a tenant out if he did not pay. He agreed with the hon. and learned Member for North Louth that it was ridiculous to invite a man paying 1s. or 1s. 6d. weekly, as rent, to come into Court to get his rent reduced. The Bill would not help forward the housing of the working classes. It would impede and discourage building because a man directly he became a tenant would be able to refuse to pay the rent he had contracted to pay. The tenant would acquire a permanent right to remain.

*MR. MACVEAGH asked which clause would enable the tenant to remain whilst not paying rent.

MR. ATKINSON understood Clause 6 to provide that the rent should be fixed, but it did not say for how long. He therefore concluded that it was intended to apply the principle of the Land Act of 1881, so that when once fixed the rent would continue for some certain period.

*MR. MACVEAGH said that was shifting the point. He asked whether, if he did not pay his rent, a tenant could not be turned out.

MR. ATKINSON said he was referring not to the rent the tenant contracted to pay, but to the rent fixed by the Court. The only security to the man who built houses for the working classes was the power to turn out a tenant if he did not pay. According to the views of hon. Members opposite, if he took a house for a year, then went into Court and got the rent fixed under this Bill, he could not be turned out as long as he paid that rent; therefore he got a perpetuity at a fixed rent. The Bill was not for the benefit of the working classes, because, so far from facilitating and encouraging the building of houses, it would hamper and hinder such operations at every step. Why did a man build a house? Simply to invest his money, or to live in the house himself, or to let it to a tenant who would enter into a contract to pay a certain rent. But this Bill would tear that contract in two; the owner would never be sure of getting the rent the tenant had contracted to pay. It would hinder men from investing money in land, because it would take from them the fruit of their investment. If the Bill were passed he could not understand why any man should build a house at all, because the house would be useless to him immediately he ceased to live in it himself. Suppose a man had a house in Dublin in which he did not wish to live for three years. He might let it to a tenant for a period of three years at a rent of £100. Under this Bill the tenant would be able to go into Court, get the rent reduced by £50, and keep the owner out of the house for ever.

*MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY asked what more did a landlord want than the rent.

MR. ATKINSON said he might want his house. The Bill would make the employment of capital in the building of houses for the working classes either by capitalists or by municipalities absolutely impossible. One matter had been referred to, which he admitted was somewhat puzzling, viz., the question of the duration of leases. It might be desirable that landlords should be induced or compelled to grant building leases for such a term as would enable tenants to expend capital upon them; but this Bill would impede rather than promote such an object. If he gave his land for a certain period at such a rent as would induce the tenant to expend capital upon it, it was in the hope and expectation that his successors, if not himself, would get back the land he had leased with the buildings upon it. [AN HON. MEMBER: Confiscation.] If he let so many perches of land which were worth now, for any temporary purpose, say, £5 or £10 a year, and if he gave a lease for 999 years at £1 in order to induce tenants to expend capital upon it, what was there in law or in morals in his getting back the place at the end of the lease? It might be that a solution of that question was desirable, but it was not to be found in this Bill, for it would not compel landlords to give long leases on adequate terms. He was not, however, arguing as to the justice or injustice of the law. His argument was that the Bill did not solve the problems before them, but that, on the contrary, it would be a direct inducement to the ground landlord not to give encouragement to build. He fully shared the extreme pain which all must feel on seeing the miserable houses in some Irish towns. But he could not think that that state of things was due to the want of building leases, or to the absence of any right to improvements, or to the want of provisions for the fixing of fair rents. In his opinion, it was due to the absence or the decay of industry. Let them take the instance of Belfast. There was probably not a city or town in the three Kingdoms where the working classes were better housed than in Belfast. What was the reason of it? Capitalists had built long rows of houses which were occupied by men who could be turned out if they did not pay the stipulated rent. But this Bill would give them a right to stay in for ever. He ventured to say that if such provisions with regard to fixing rents and giving a perpetuity to the occupier as were contained in the measure under discussion had been in force in Belfast during the last fifty years, not one of those rows of working men's houses would ever have been built. It was only because the capitalist was sure of getting his rent that he invested his capital in that way.

The Bill was conceived in the present interests of the shopkeepers. It would not affect their permanent interests, but it did affect their present interest, because it undoubtedly enabled a shopkeeper, when his lease was expiring, to get it extended against the will of the landlord and to get his rent reduced. To that extent it conferred a benefit on the present occupier, but he was not at all sure that the benefit would be permanent. When the present occupier died, leaving a widow and children, if the premises were let for a period with the idea of the son taking over the business subsequently, the premises and business would be gone for ever, because the new and, as he was supposed to be, temporary tenant would be entitled to go and get a fair rent fixed and to hold in perpetuity. That was why he said the Bill was by no means in the permanent interests of the tenant. The Bill was entirely misconceived. It was an attempt to apply the principles of the Land Act to a totally different condition of things. Why were the Land Acts passed? Because it was recognised that the tenant had a real interest in the soil, that he alone made the improvements, that he could be turned out and his improvements confiscated, that agriculture was the only industry in the country, that the tenant was so poor he could not protect himself, and that he had to take the land or starve; and these conditions were held to justify the abolition of freedom of contract and the intervention of the State between tenant and landlord. No one had pressed that view more strongly than Mr. Gladstone, who, in introducing his great Land Bill, excused himself for interfering in contracts on the ground that the tenants were not free, that tenant and landlord did not deal on equal terms. Mr. Gladstone said—

> "No person values more highly than I do freedom of contract; it lies at the root of every healthful condition of society."

and the reason he gave for invading freedom of contract was that the contracts were not free contracts, that the landlord was dealing with a man who had no choice, who must either take the land or starve.

The conditions to be dealt with by the present Bill were altogether different. Why was the Act for fixing fair rents passed in 1881? The Act of 1870 gave certain rights; it gave compensation for improvements, and so on; but those benefits were given only when the tenant was going out. If he wanted to stay, the necessities of the case induced him to submit to increases of rent, which practically confiscated the improvements and the other benefits that had been conferred upon him. He was not free to defend himself, and so the Legislature stepped in to preserve to him the benefits the earlier legislation had intended to confer. But here the case was altogether different. He absolutely denied that either historically or actually there was any parallel between the case of the Irish land occupier, who had benefited by land legislation, and the cases cited that day. In the former case the absence of freedom of contract was alleged; the cases now brought forward were special cases of contracts between landlords and a class of capitalists, both of whom were perfectly able to take care of themselves. Individual hardships and inconvenience in occasional instances did not justify interference with freedom of contract, as Mr. Gladstone had himself acknowledged when explaining his own legislation. He could not understand the difference between entering into a contract and enforcing a contract. If a merchant entered into a contract to supply certain goods, and the market went up, he had still to carry out the contract, even though it ruined him. Why should a different principle be applied in the question of a lease? If a man took a piece of land for a term of years which did not justify him in expending capital upon it, and then at the end of the term he failed to obtain a renewal, where was the moral difference between enforcing that contract, and enforcing a contract with a merchant to supply 1,000 tons of hay? The principles upon which the Acts of 1870, 1881, and 1887 rested did not apply to such cases as these. Freedom of contract was such a precious thing, and its benefits were so inestimable, that although it might occasionally work hardly it could not be forfeited because of the occasional hardship it inflicted. As to the main provisions of the Bill he regarded the fixing of a fair rent as infinitely the most important part. He would not deal in detail with the provisions of the Bill in respect to compensation for improvements. The object, apparently, was to apply the principle of the Act of 1870 generally; but there were important omissions, as, for instance, in relation to improvements carried out in pursuance of contract. Great injustice might result from the application of the principle which had been applied to improvements in land tenancies. In land the productive capacity was increased by improvements, and it was right that when the land passed again into the hands of the landlord he should pay for the enhanced value. That, however, did not apply to a house. The improvement made by the tenant might be suitable for the particular purposes of his occupation or business and yet unsuitable for another tenant or for the landlord. It was impossible for the Government to approve the principle of the Bill.

*MR. FIELD said the limited time at his disposal would not allow him to properly develop his arguments—but he should say that with the exception of the concluding sentences the right hon. Gentleman had not touched upon the main principles of this Bill, which he has entirely misrepresented, respecting the letting of houses for a limited period not leasehold. He had indulged in a good deal of sarcasm as to the way the Bill had been drawn up, but he had not made any suggestions as to the way it ought to have been drafted. He wished to know if the Attorney-General was prepared to bring in a Bill to carry out the ideas that had been suggested. It was very easy to criticise Bills brought in, and declare that such important legislation as this ought not to be introduced by private Members. He would remind the House, however, that some of the most important reforms passed by the House of Commons had been introduced by private Members, and further, that public Bills introduced and drafted by the Government officials were also subjected to criticism and amendment. To-day the Attorney-General had acted upon the principle of "when you have a bad case abuse the opposition." The Irish Members had been accused of standing in the way of legislation regarding the housing problem, when the fact was that the Irish Parliamentary Party were, and had been, consistent supporters of dealing adequately with the questions of cheap and suitable dwellings for the workers. This was not a Bill for the housing of the working classes, but simply for the protection of town tenants, tenement occupiers, and inhabitant householders. He thought that those who had supported the protection policy in regard to fiscal matters might adopt the same policy in regard to this protective measure. He happened to be a member of the Blackrock urban district council and also of the Dublin County Council, and he found that the financial difficulty in regard to the housing of the working classes was that the present system of transfer of title in regard to property added so enormously to the cost of the sites that they could not under existing circumstances erect cheap dwellings. That was the extraordinary condition of affairs. With regard to the criticisms of the right hon. Gentleman respecting the building of blocks of houses and the eviction of tenement occupiers, he wished to remind the House that it had frequently occurred that large numbers of tenement occupiers were evicted, not because they refused to pay rent, but because the landlord took objection to some action on the part of the tenant, and that sort of capricious eviction ought not to be permitted. The right hon. Gentleman had devoted very little attention to the vital question raised about the confiscation of the tenants' improvements. Nothing had been said about the fact that the ground landlord who owned a town when the leases fell in not only took over the improvements made by the tenant, but he also appropriated all the improvements made by the taxes paid by the ratepayers. Since the year 1869 the ratepayers of Kingstown had contributed £350,000 in rates expended for municipal improvements. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in his opinion, he thought it was a correct state of things that the ground landlords of Kingstown should be able under the present law not only to appropriate the buildings of the tenants and their improvements, and also raise their rents and compel a large expenditure, but also practically utilise the £350,000 sterling which the ratepayers had paid in taxation, to which the ground landlords had not contributed, for taking over the roads, the main sewers, and the public buildings and everything that made a town. Was it just that all this should be practically appropriated by the ground landlords?

Mr. ATKINSON said that question was not dealt with by this Bill.

Mr. FIELD said that this was so—but if the tenants were secured in their tenure and improvement, they would have the use of those municipal facilities paid for by themselves, but under the Terminable Leasehold system their improvements were confiscated and their rents and valuation raised. In America the Betterment law provides that 80 per cent. of the values created by municipal expenditure shall be appropriated by the municipality that made the expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman was aware that the Terminable Leasehold system which existed in England and Ireland was not in existence in any other part of the world, and it was unknown even in Scotland. In the year 1895 the Prime Minister, at Manchester, said he had been concerned in the passage of a Bill for Ireland, having for its object the advancement of money to aid the tenants to buy their homes, and he regarded as being of enormous importance that the number of owners of houses, as well as the number of holders of land, should be increased. There was no freedom of contract in this matter, for the will may be nominally free when the action cannot in any sense be called voluntary. Now unless the Government took some action an agitation would spring up which would compel some definite legislative step to deal with this grievance. As one long identified with this subject, having introduced a Bill every session since he entered Parliament, he trusted that the House by giving a large support to the principles of this measure which was theoretically approved by the Prime Minister, would educate Parliamentary opinion to pass amending legislation and so ensure economic justice and social reforms to millions of urban residents.

Mr. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket) said he had not been at all convinced by the speech of the learned Attorney-General for Ireland, and he should certainly give his vote in favour of the Second Reading of this Bill. Hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House had trotted out the bogey of the Land Bill of 1881 and had used it for all it was worth. Nevertheless he thought a case had been made out for the Second Reading of this Bill, and he should vote for this measure on its merits. He hoped the Government Whips would not be put on upon this occasion, and that they might be allowed upon this question the privilege of voting upon a Bill according to its merits. He would not give a machine-made vote, and he should vote as the justice of the case required it. He had been enormously impressed by the unanimity of Irish opinion on that question, and that opinion had not been opposed on this occasion by the Ulster Members. Upon such questions as this he was a believer in expert advice, and the experts on this occasion were men on the spot. When such experts agreed, he paid more attention to their speeches than he did to the speeches from hon. Members who resided in the neighbourhood of London. The Government were going to propose compensation in this country to prevent a hardship being done to a certain class in the exercise of their calling, and he did not see why a similar protection should not be given to those affected by this Bill. He hoped they would all be allowed to vote as they pleased without the Government Whips being put on.

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.) said he entirely associated himself with his colleagues with regard to the support they had given to this Bill. In the capital town of his constituency not long ago they approached the local landlord and asked the price of some building sites upon land which he rented at £2 an acre in the urban district, and £908 was the price he asked them for an acre of land within the urban area for the erection of artisans' dwellings, or about 500 years purchase for the sites.

Question put.

Words added—

The House divided:—Ayes, 162; Noes, 199. (Division List No. 43.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork N. E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C.B.
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinnan, J.
Delany, William
Denny, Colonel
Devlin Charles Ramsay Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobbie, Joseph
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Ellice,Capt.E.C.S.Andrw'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Evans,SirFrancis H.(Maidstone
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Hammond, John
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones,David Brynmor(Swansea
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Leese,Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M‘Calmont, Colonel James
M‘Hugh, Patrick A.
M‘Kean, John
M‘Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M‘Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Malcolm, Ian
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh,N.)
Mooney, John J.
Moore, William
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway,N)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James(Wicklow,W.)
O'Connor, T, P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, William
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Rose, Charles Day
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer,Rt Hn.C R (Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas,David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomson, F W (York W. R.)
Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace Robert
Walton, John Lawson (Leeds S.
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
White, Luke (York E. R.)
Wilson, Fred W. (Norfork Mid)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Woodhouse, Sir J T Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captain Donelan.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster Rt Hn Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John

Aubrey-Fletcher Rt Hon Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, J. George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach Rt Hn Sir Michael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles Lt.-Col. H F (Middlesex
Bowles, T Gibson (King's Lynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Campbell, Rt Hn. J A (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V C W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn J A (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dewar, Sir T R (Tower Hamlets
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt Hon Sir Joseph C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants W.)
Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hon Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S.W.
Garfit, William
Gordon, Hn. J E (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon. Maj, Evans-(T'r H'mlets
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Henry D (Shrewsbury)
Groves, James Grimble
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn. Lord G (Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, James (Staffords N. W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Horner, Frederick William
Howard, J (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Roland
Hutton, John (Yorks. N. R)
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kenyon-Slaney Col. W. (Salop.
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants. Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N S
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col Charles W (Evesham
Long, Rt Hon Walter (Bristol S
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Col Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J (Portsmouth)
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H E (Wigt'n
Milner, Rt Hon Sir Frederick G
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hon Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir Harry S. (Limehouse
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Chas. Hilton (Lincoln)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H (Hertford, East)
Smith, James (Parker Lanarks)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J G (Oxf'd Univ.
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C E H. (Sheffield
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col A C E (Taunton
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, A Stanley (York E. R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wodehouse, Rt Hn E R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

Adjourned at twenty-two minutes before six of the Clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 7th March, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—Southend Water. The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

Ipswich Dock Commission Bill [H.L.]. The Lord Balfour informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 22nd and the 25th of February last, discharged, and Bill committed.

Withnell Gas Bill [H.L.]. The Lord Balfour informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. The orders made on the 19th and 25th of February last discharged. Ordered, That the Bill be not further proceeded with.

Isle of Thanet Light Railways Bill [H.L.]. The Lord Balfour informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. The orders made on the 22nd and 25th of February last discharged. Ordered, That the Bill be not further proceeded with.

Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]. The order made on the 25th of February last appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bill, discharged.

Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.], and other Bills, do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; read, and agreed to. All petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill.

Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]. Report by the Board of Trade on the above Bill. Laid before the House pursuant to Standing Order No. 90.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3124. Chile (Coquimbo, &c.).

TREATY SERIES, No. 4 (1904).

Agreement between the United Kingdom and Spain providing for the settlement by arbitration of certain classes of questions which may arise between the two Governments; signed at London, 27th February, 1904.

PRIMARY EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Report of Mr. F. H. Dale, His Majesty's Inspector of Schools, Board of Education, Whitehall, London.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP.

Supplement to the annual report of the chief inspector of factories and workshops, for the year 1902: Return of persons employed in factories, workshops, and laundries (textile factories, laundries).

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Report and Papers relating to the training of teachers for the year 1902-1903.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILLS.

PRIZE COURTS BILL [H.L.] (No. 21).

A Bill for amending the law relating to the administration of oaths for the purpose of proceedings in Prize Courts: and

NAVAL PRIZE BILL [H.L.] (No. 22).

A Bill to consolidate, with amendments, the enactments relating to Naval Prize of War.

Were presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1^a; and to be printed.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

THE DEATH OF LORD SHAND.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): My Lords, I cannot forbear from saying on the present occasion a word or two on the subject of the loss which your Lordships' House has sustained in the death of my noble and learned friend Lord Shand. He was sitting with us in the performance of his judicial duties a very short time ago, and I think it is only due to his memory to say that, after a long and a distinguished career as a Judge in Scotland, he, while being under no sort of obligation to attend our sittings and without any remuneration or reward of any kind, was for more than eleven years aiding and assisting, both in this House and on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, in the discharge of judicial business. We have derived great advantage from his assistance, which was always most cheerfully rendered in either of these tribunals; and without his assistance sometimes it would not have been easy to have had both Courts going at the same time, and the concentration of both into one would have resulted in serious delays to the judicial business of the House. It would be very ungrateful if we did not recognise the most generous and disinterested services which for so long a time Lord Shand rendered with such great advantage to the public.

House adjourned at half-past Four o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 7th March, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Whitby Gas Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Brymbo Water Bill; Great Central and Midland Joint Railways Bill; Great Central Railway Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Sheppy Gas Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill. Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

St. Marylebone Electric Lighting Bill. Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

BIRMINGHAM BISHOPRIC.

Two Petitions from Birmingham, for establishment; to lie upon the Table.

ELECTIONS (HOURS OF POLLING).

Petition from Woolwich, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Lewes; Crouch End; Dulwich; Berwick upon Tweed; Longton; Launceston; Bacup; Bishopsgate; Guildford; Clacton on Sea (two); Allendale; Lincoln; Bradford; Little Horton; Felingwm; Cariad Dyffryn; Penygroes; Reading and Henley on Thames; Ryde; Highgate; Poynton; Northampton; Dartmouth; Stonehaven; Patricroft; and Manchester; to lie upon the Table.

PRASAD, MADHO.

Petition of Madho Prasad, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

Copy presented, of Supplement to the Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Workshops for the year 1902: Return of persons employed in Factories, Workshops, and Laundries:—Textile Factories, Laundries [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Report and Papers relating to the Training of Teachers for the year 1902–3 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Report of Mr. F. H. Dale, His Majesty's Inspector of Schools, Board of Education, on Primary Education in Ireland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (COTTON).

Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to Improvement in Indian Cotton [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 to 1903.

Copy presented, of an Order, dated the 3rd March, 1904, revoking Order No. 6,794, defining a Foreign Animals Quarantine Station at Southampton [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAYS ABANDONMENT.

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting the Saddleworth and Springhead Tramways Abandonment Bill and the objects thereof [pursuant to Standing Order 158B]; referred to the Committee on the Bill.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 3124 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TREATY SERIES (No. 4, 1904).

Copy presented, of Agreement between the United Kingdom and Spain providing for the settlement by arbitration of certain classes of questions which may arise between the two Governments. Signed at London, 27th February, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Inquiry into Charities (County of Lancaster, Further Return relative thereto [ordered 8th August, 1898; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; and Inquiry into Charities (County Borough of Bolton), Return relative thereto [ordered 22nd February; *Mr. Griffith-Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 85.]

TRADE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM WITH GERMANY.

Return ordered, "showing the value of imports into the United Kingdom from, and exports from the United Kingdom to, the German Empire during the last ten years, as recorded in (a) the German official Returns, (b) Reports of the Board of Trade; together with a Memorandum explaining, as far as possible, the discrepancies between the German and British figures, and the method of collecting the data upon which the Returns are based employed in the United Kingdom and Germany, respectively."—(*Mr. White Ridley.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Dispensing of Medicines in Public Institutions by Unqualified Persons.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will state what steps will be taken to carry into effect the rider of the jury in the case of the inquest held on 25th February upon the four female patients in Portsmouth Lunatic Asylum who died from the effects of careless dispensing; and whether the Local Government Board will cause regulations to be made requiring all dispensaries in public institutions to be in charge of persons registered under the Pharmacy Acts.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I have been asked by my right hon. friend to take this Question. There are several difficult points involved in this case, and for the present I can only say that I am in communication with the Lunacy Commissioners, and that the matter shall be thoroughly considered.

Interference with Patients treated at the Macedonian Relief Hospital at Castoria.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.); To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that sick persons have recently been molested on their way to, and on leaving, the temporary hospital of the Macedonian Relief Fund at Castoria; and whether instructions will be sent to His Majesty's Consul-General at Salonika to prevent the recurrence of such incidents.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) His Majesty's Government have not received any information to the effect stated in the Question; but His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople will be instructed to make inquiries, and to take any steps which may be possible to prevent the recurrence of such incidents.

Navy—Repairs to Vessels.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what vessels are to be repaired and refitted for which £247,000 is asked in the Navy Estimates for 1904–5; what was the total first cost of each vessel; and what amount is estimated to be spent on each.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The vessels in question are the following:—First Cost (including Direct Charges and Incidental Expenditure):—"Goliath," £866,006; "Canopus," £866,516; "Argonaut," £545,756; "Crescent," £392,453; "St. George," £399,755; "Terrible," £708,619; "Highflyer," £280,182; "Rainbow," £187,740; "Pique," £188,589; "Warrior," £389,394; "Triumph," £274,121. All these vessels except the last four are already in hand, the refits having been commenced under previous programmes. In view of the special character of the arrangement under which these repairs are being carried out, it would probably not tend to economy to publish beforehand the estimated expenditure on each ship.

Repairs to "Circe," "Leda," and "Jason."

MR. RUNCIMAN: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the "Circe," "Leda," and "Jason" were repaired in private dockyards on the time and material basis; and whether the same basis is being, and will be, adopted in the case of the "Halcyon."

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The re-engining and re-boilering of these four vessels was contracted for at a fixed price, but the subsequent work of completing them for sea (which work it was originally intended to execute in His Majesty's dockyards) was contracted for on the system of "net cost plus percentage."

Boy Seamen.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the supply of boys willing to go to sea if effective means for their doing so can be provided, he will state what steps he proposes to take to give effect to the eleventh recommendation of the Board of Trade Committee to the effect that every encouragement should be given to training ships and to the training of boys on merchant vessels with the object of increasing the number of British seamen in the mercantile marine; what will be the total number of boy sailors carried under the reduced lights dues clause of the Merchant Shipping Mercantile Marine Fund Act of 1898, as compared with the number, 16,150, mentioned by the Member for Croydon as the number of boys which would be carried if his proposal were accepted.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The Board of Trade have commended to the consideration of the principal associations representing British shipowners the recommendation of the Mercantile Marine Committee referred to, and with the co-operation of the other Departments of the Government interested in educational matters in the United Kingdom they have arranged for the circulation of a Memorandum inviting local educational authorities to give their assistance and encouragement to training ships. The number of boy sailors enrolled as probationers in the Royal Naval Reserve up to the end of last month is 3,217. A steady increase in the annual numbers is shown, and is especially noticeable in the figures for last year. If the same rate of progression is maintained, some 4,000 or 5,000 boys will have been enrolled by the 31st March, 1905, when the section of the Merchant Shipping (Mercantile Marine Fund) Act, under which the scheme was established, ceases to be in force. The number mentioned by my right hon. friend the Member for Croydon was the possible maximum.

Disposal of Bodies of Whales cast up by the Sea.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the fact that whales along with wreck of the sea belong to the King, due precautions will be insisted on that persons killing whales shall bury, burn, or in some manner dispose of the carcases so that they shall not float about the sea or drift back ashore, causing danger and discomfort.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I understand that the whales referred to are killed outside the territorial limits of the United Kingdom. If this is so, it would appear that they do not become the property of the King as Fishes Royal, even if, after being killed, they are brought within the territorial limits. In these circumstances the Board of Trade are not aware that they have power to give any directions on the subject.

Imports of Flax Line and Tow Yarns into Ireland from France.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state the weight and value in sterling of flax line yarns and flax tow yarns imported into Ireland, during the last five years, from France.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) According to the official trade accounts, no linen yarns were imported direct from France into Ireland during the period named.

Exports of Coal, etc., from Germany to France.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state the quantities of coal, culm, coke, and patent fuel exported from Germany to France in the years 1901, 1902, and 1903, distinguishing between railway-borne and seaborne exports of such commodities.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The German Trade Accounts do not distinguish between rail-borne and sea-borne exports The French Trade Accounts, however, give the following figures as to the imports into France from Germany of the commodities referred to in the years mentioned :—

IMPORTS INTO FRANCE FROM GERMANY. GENERAL TRADE.

	1901.			1902.			1903.		
	By sea.	By land.	Total.	By sea.	By land.	Total.	By sea.*	By land.*	Total.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Coal . .	2,533	767,358	769,891	65,951	947,423	1,013,374	—	—	1,054,260
Patent Fuel .	—	—	—	—	15,397	15,397	—	—	31,230
Coke . .	1,928	768,464	770,392	54	662,461	662,515	—	—	947,887

Adulteration of Whisky in Warehouses under Government Supervision.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he is aware that revenue officials with the knowledge that a false description is taking place do not prevent grain and foreign spirits being mixed with malt and whisky and labelled as pure malt whisky in warehouses under Government supervision; and, if so, will he state what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) There are many reasons which make it undesirable to employ revenue officials in an attempt to regulate the trade descriptions that are placed upon goods in bond, the strongest of all being that any such regulation would be perfectly futile, as it would only result in postponing the application of descriptions until after the goods had passed out of bond, and would afford no real protection to the public.

Telephone Directories in Irish Post Offices.

MR. WILLIAM M'KILLOP (Sligo, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that the telephone directories in many of the post offices in Ireland are three years old, and if he can state how many directories for 1904 for the trunk lines and of those of exchanges with the National Telephone Company have been provided this year for Irish offices, and at what cost per directory.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) A copy of the latest directory of the National

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* Information not yet available.

Telephone Company, containing a complete list of their subscribers, and a copy of the supplementary directory since issued, has been supplied for use at every post office exchange and call office in Ireland, as well as in other parts of the United Kingdom. Copies of the latest editions of the Post Office Telephone Directories have also been supplied. Instructions have from time to time been given that all obsolete directories shall be withdrawn from use; and I shall be glad if the hon. Member will give me the names of any offices at which these instructions would appear to have been disregarded. The National Telephone Company's complete list of subscribers in the United Kingdom is published by the company at the price of 10s. per copy.

Underground Cable between London and Scotland—Progress of Work.

Sir ANDREW AGNEW (Edinburgh, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state how much of the underground telegraph cable between London and Edinburgh and Glasgow has been actually laid; what further progress will be made with it during the present year; and when he expects that the work will be completed.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The line of pipes for the underground cable now runs continuously from London to Carlisle, and a section of nineteen miles has also been laid over the Beattock incline in Scotland. By the end of the financial year a double line of pipes will also have been laid from Manchester to Leeds. The permanent cable will be ready for use as far as Warrington. I cannot at present state when the underground line will be completed, but I fully appreciate the importance of pushing on the work as rapidly as possible, and a large sum has been included in next year's Estimates to provide for the extension of the line.

Post Office Telegrams—Districts with Names consisting of more than one Word.

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in analogy with the rule that all names of towns and villages which are denoted by more than one word are counted as one word each in a telegraphic message, he intends to issue instructions that the names of districts in the metropolis which are expressed by more than one word, such as Charing Cross, Bethnal Green, etc., should be counted as one word in telegrams.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am sorry that I do not see my way to propose any change in the method of counting in telegrams the names of districts in the metropolis which are expressed by more than one word, such as Charing Cross, Bethnal Green, etc.

Norwegian Whalers in Scotch Waters.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: To ask the Secretary for Scotland, if, in view of the fact that the destruction of whales has been prohibited for ten years by the Norwegian Government, and that an influx of Norwegian whalers is expected in Shetland and the Hebrides, measures will be considered by which the danger to fishermen from floating carcases, the nuisance to crofters and others caused by decaying carcases drifting ashore, and the poisoning of mussel-beds, will for the future be prevented.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) The whole matter is having my attention, and the proceedings and methods of those engaged in the industry are being carefully studied, with a view to preventing any serious cause for complaint. The Secretary for Scotland has no jurisdiction over floating carcases. With respect to the question of nuisance on shore the Local Government Board have communicated with the local sanitary authority, and directed their attention to the provisions of The Public Health Act, 1897, Section 32, which will enable them to impose suitable restrictions. No evidence of damage to mussel-beds by the industry has as yet been adduced, and there have only been two complaints in general terms: these are to be inquired into at as early a date as possible.

Scotch Votes—Unexpended Balances.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary for Scotland, having regard to the fact that the unexpended balances surrendered to the Exchequer on Scottish Votes in the last ten years amounted to £204,013 15s. 6d., will he specify the Votes from which this sum was derived.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) I can only refer the hon. Member to the Appropriation Accounts, where the information he desires is given in detail.

Treatment of Smallpox at Greenock.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been directed to the increase of smallpox in Greenock; whether he is aware that the hospital accommodation is insufficient and the buildings overcrowded; can he state whether patients are detained sufficiently long to avert danger of their spreading the disease after discharge; whether the reception house is well situated and sufficiently commodious for the proper isolation of all contacts; and what steps he proposes to take to ensure the provision of adequate hospital and reception house accommodation by the local authority.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) The hospital accommodation for smallpox in Greenock has been extended from time to time during the progress of the epidemic, and steps are being taken for the erection of another additional pavilion. The circumstances attending the occurrence of every case are reported to the Board, and there is nothing in these reports to suggest that patients are prematurely discharged. The existing reception house is suitable for the purpose, but has not been equal to the demands arising from the epidemic. The Board have called upon the local authority to provide additional accommodation. They understand that great difficulty is experienced in acquiring proper premises.

Contracts for Post Office Mail Bags. Foreign Canvas.

Sir JOHN LENG (Dundee): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the Prison Commissioners have again given a contract for Post Office mail bag cloth to a middleman who in former years has supplied foreign instead of home made canvas; and, if so, will he state whether any security has been taken that this year's supply shall be home made; whether he is aware that the leading canvas manufacturers in this country have storage accommodation in London and other large cities so that they can deliver even small quantities promptly if required; and, if so, will he say if the Prison Commissioners have ever proposed to make this one of the conditions for such contracts.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The contract for mail bag canvas has been divided between seven competitors, the lowest tender having been accepted (in accordance with the regular practice) for each description of canvas required. The competitors, it is believed, include both manufacturers and middlemen, and it is not known to the Commissioners whether any of them have supplied foreign canvas in previous years. The form of contract is the same as in previous years, and contains no stipulation as to the source or district from which material must be obtained. There is no condition in the contract requiring "storage," but the mode of delivery is governed by Clause 3 of the general conditions of contract, *i.e.*, "the supplies shall be delivered at the contractor's expense at such time and place as the Governors, or other officers acting on their behalf, shall from time to time direct."

Death Sentences on Women for Infanticide.

Mr. MARSHALL HALL (Lancashire, Southport): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, having regard to the fact that a sentence of death passed upon a woman convicted of infanticide is rarely, if ever, executed, he will introduce a Bill giving the Judge presiding at the trial and conviction of a female prisoner for this crime power in his discretion to record sentence of death against her, instead of actually pronouncing such sentence in open Court.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I presume my hon. and learned friend refers only to cases of women who have killed their own infant children, not to other cases, *e.g.*, murders by "baby-farmers." It is true that in the former cases the capital sentence is scarcely ever carried out; but, on the other hand, the objections to the practice of "recording" death sentences are serious, and I do not, at the present time, see my way to proposing new legislation on this very difficult subject.

Licensed Premises Owned by Brewers.

Mr. PARTINGTON (Derbyshire, High Peak): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can say how many public houses and beer houses, licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquors for consumption on the premises in England and Wales, are owned by brewers or brewing companies; and if he will grant a Return showing the number of such premises in each licensing district which are so owned.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I have no accurate information on this subject, but there is reason to believe that the figures for which the hon. Member asks would represent about 75 per cent. of the total. I am not aware of any means by which a Return could be made with accuracy, and do not think that the labour involved in any attempt to get the figures would be justified.

Exemption of Savings from Income-Tax.

Mr. MARSHALL HALL: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will consider the possibility of making some concession to professional and business men enabling them to put aside a certain portion of their annual income towards making a provision for the future without including such portion in their annual return for Income-Tax.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Under the existing Income-Tax Act a person who insures his life or that of his wife, or who contracts for a deferred annuity for himself or his wife with an insurance company registered in the United Kingdom, is allowed a deduction from his assessment in respect of the annual premiums up to one-sixth of his total income; and no further concession in this direction seems to be called for.

Authority to Deport British Subjects from China.

Mr. TOULMIN (Bury, Lancashire) To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if his attention has been called to the fact that Major General Ventris has charged the editor of the *China Times* (Pekin) with inciting to a breach of the peace in an article condemning Russian ill-usage of defenceless Japanese, and that, in default of his giving security for good behaviour, his deportation is pending; will he state whether there is any British authority in China with power to deport a British subject under such circumstances; and, if not, under what authority the Court is acting before which the editor has been brought.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The attention of His Majesty's Minister at Pekin having been called by the General-Officer-Commanding, China, to certain virulent and defamatory articles against Russia, published at Tientsin by the *China Times*, Sir E. Satow directed that an information should be laid against the editor in His Majesty's Consular Court at Tientsin under Article 106 of the China and Japan Order in Council, 1865. Under this Article, should it be shown on oath, to the satisfaction of any of His Majesty's Courts in China, that there is reasonable ground to apprehend that the acts or conduct of any British subject in China are or is likely to produce or excite to a breach of the public peace, the Court within the jurisdiction whereof he happens to be may cause him to be brought before it and require him to give security to the satisfaction of the Court to keep the peace or for his future good behaviour as the case may require; and if the person required to give security should fail to do so, the Court may order that he be deported from China to such place as the Court directs. His Majesty's Government have approved Sir E. Satow's action in the matter.

National Scholars and Associateship of Royal School of Mines.

Mr. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether the privilege hitherto granted to National scholars to secure an associateship of the Royal School of Mines in mining and metallurgy has been withdrawn; and, if so, on what grounds.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The hon. Member is under a misapprehension in supposing that it is no longer possible for National scholars to secure an associateship of the Royal College of Mines. It is merely required that they should, as a rule, take the division corresponding to the group in which they obtained their scholarships. The change in the regulations, to which the hon. Member refers, was made in 1902, with the object of enabling the Board to control the extent to which the tenure of these scholarships may be transferred to the courses for the associateship of the Royal School of Mines.

Reduction in Values of National and Research Scholarships.

MR. ERNEST GRAY: To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if he will explain why the Board have recently reduced the value of the National Scholarship from 30s. per week to 25s. per week, and the value of a Research Scholarship from 30s. to 25s. per week; and whether, having regard to the desirability of keeping the scholarships open to students unable to supplement them by private means, he will advise the Board to reconsider their decision.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The change to which reference is made in the Question formed part of a readjustment of the amounts paid as allowances to students in the Royal College of Science, and was decided upon not recently, but in 1901. The allowances then were: to Royal Exhibitioners £50 a session of about forty weeks; to National scholars 30s. a week; and to students in training 21s. a week. The Board were of opinion that it was desirable to equalise these rates, and decided that for National scholarships and studentships in training alike, the rate should be 25s. a week. The new rates were duly announced in 1901, but did not take effect until 1902, and then only in the case of new scholars. The students to whom these awards are made receive also railway fares for one journey to and fro each session between their homes and London, and are admitted free to the lectures and laboratories of the Royal College of Science. There is no separate class of research scholarships, but exhibitions or scholarships vacated by the resignation of the holders are awarded for the residue of the time during which they run to former students who desire to prosecute research in the college. These awards are necessarily of the same amounts as the original scholarships. The Board have never intended that these scholarships should be of an eleemosynary character. They believe that the amount of the scholarships is sufficient to attract good candidates, and that in the majority of cases they provide an adequate supplement to the other resources of the students, and they consider that in any cases where more is needed the assistance should be provided under the supervision of local authorities rather than from funds administered by the Board. The students who gain these scholarships have as a rule been for a period of years under the direct observation of local school authorities, who thus necessarily possess, or can readily obtain, a more intimate knowledge of the circumstances of each student than can the Board. The scholarships now provided by local authorities offer in many places the further assistance required. In these circumstances I do not consider it desirable that the decision of the Board be reconsidered.

Financial Liability of a Publicly-Appointed Manager of a Non-provided School.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education what financial liability under the Education Act of 1902 attaches to a publicly-appointed manager of a non-provided school; whether such manager is personally liable for any expenditure incurred by the general body of managers, even though he was not present at the meeting when such expenditure was determined upon, or, if present, had voted against it; and also whether such manager is in any case personally liable for expenditure incurred by the managers in the upkeep of the school building.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) A publicly-appointed manager of a voluntary school can only incur personal liability for expenditure incurred by the general body of managers if he makes himself a party to a contract. Managers appointed by local authorities would therefore incur liability only if they joined in giving orders for repairs or other expenditure, or if they allowed the general body of managers to be regarded as their agents for the purpose. They can communicate through the local Press, and record on the minutes of the managers' meeting the fact that they repudiate all such liability, and do not recognise their colleagues as their agents. If they do this it would seem that they might safely attend a meeting at which expenditure on repairs was voted, or might even vote in favour of a resolution that such expenditure was desirable.

Cost of Changes in Dress and Equipment of Officers in the Indian Army.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will grant a Return of all changes in the regulations affecting the dress and equipment of officers in the Indian Staff Corps and Indian Army during the ten years ending 31st December 1903, showing the approximate cost of the changes in each rank to the officers concerned.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The Government of India will be requested to furnish the particulars asked for.

Suggested Change of Uniform in Bengal Cavalry Regiments.

SIR SEYMOUR KING: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Government of India have had under consideration any suggestion or proposal for the abolition of tunics for officers in the Bengal Cavalry Regiments and the substitution of kurtas in their places; and, if so, whether, in the interest of economy, he will veto a change which would entail considerable expenditure on every officer of the Indian Army affected.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) No proposal to the effect described in the Question has been brought before the Government of India. If it should hereafter come forward for consideration the expense which it would entail upon the officers will be duly taken into account.

Board of Works Advertisements for Tenders in the Enniscorthy District.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he will state what circulation the *Waterford News* and the *Waterford Chronicle* have in the Enniscorthy district of county Wexford; and if in future the Board of Works will advertise for the supplies for the Enniscorthy public buildings in the county Wexford newspapers.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The two newspapers mentioned circulate generally in the county Wexford and other counties adjoining. I am unaware of the extent of their circulation in Enniscorthy district. The Board of Works will consider the suggestion of the hon. Baronet before inviting tenders on the next occasion.

Excessive Drinking at a Hunting Match at Loughbrickland.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, on the 27th ultimo, in the neighbourhood of Loughbrickland, a hunting match was held in connection with the local Irish Hunting Club and the County Antrim Harriers; that as a result of excessive drinking two men have since died; and if he can state how many received hospital treatment as the result of the day's proceedings; if he can say who supplied the drink; and what action, if any, he intends taking in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I have received a report of the occurrences referred to. So far as the police have been able to ascertain there has been one death due to the effects of excessive drinking, and no person received hospital treatment on the occasion. I am making further inquiry into the matter.

Irish National School Teachers.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the standard numbers laid down by the National Board for the different grades of teachers, and whether the Board has the right to increase or decrease these numbers; whether, in view of the fact that the Board has awarded increments for continued good service to some teachers who held a certain classification and received certain reports from inspectors for the past three years, he will explain why they have so far disallowed increments to other teachers holding the same classification, having the requisite average attendance, and having as good, and in some cases better, reports from inspectors.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The number of teachers that may be recognised in each grade above third grade and in each section of the first grade is fixed from time to time by the Commissioners. They do not publish these numbers, nor do they consider it desirable that they should be made public. The standard numbers fixed at present, however, are in excess of the actual number of teachers in the second and first grades, and no teacher has been deprived of promotion on account of these "standard" numbers. The Commissioners have full power, with the concurrence of the Treasury, to change the "standard" numbers from time to time. The Commissioners have not treated any body of teachers exceptionally in regard to increments. If any specific case of alleged grievance is submitted it will be inquired into.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone ,S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that, previous to 1900, scholars in the Irish training colleges who had obtained over 65 per cent. at their final (col. 3) examination were ranked as second-class teachers on obtaining appointments as principals of schools; and if the Commissioners of National Education will consider the advisability of reverting to the old system and place in the second grade those teachers who are now principals of schools who obtained more than this percentage at their final examination since 1900, more especially those who have the advantage of having passed through the full course of science as laid down in the new programme.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I am informed by the Commissioners that, prior to 1900, teachers on leaving training colleges and having passed their final examinations successfully were placed in the second class. Classification of teachers was abolished, however, from the 1st April, 1900, along with the system of promotion by examination. After the 1st April,1900, all National teachers were divided into three grades These grades do not correspond to the old classes. The class of a teacher was an indication of his attainments as tested by examination, and his class salary did not indicate what his full income from State sources was, but only represented a small portion of his total income. The grade a teacher ranks in indicates the rank to which he has attained by good service and seniority, and his grade salary represents the greater portion of his income from State sources. Under the new system all teachers have to commence work at the lowest step of the ladder—the third grade, and work their way up by good service and efficiency. To act on the suggestion in the Question would be a departure from the principle of the new arrangements, and would entail a very large increase in the Vote for Public Education.

Hearing of Land Appeals in the Midleton (County Cork) District.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork Co., E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say when the chief Land Commissioners will sit to hear appeals against the decisions of the sub-Commissioners in cases heard in the Midleton (county Cork) district over a year and a-half ago.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) A sitting will be held at Cork on 10th May.

Completion of Drainage of Gully River (Queen's County).

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a portion of the Gully River (Queen's County) was drained in 1902 at a cost of something like £1,400, and, in view of the fact that this outlay has been completely ineffective in consequence of the obstruction in the lower portion of the river, whether he can state what steps it is proposed to take to complete this work.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Drainage Board of the Lower Gully district having refused to repair their works, the Commissioners of Public Works have instructed their engineer to arrange for the execution of the necessary repairs.

Salaries of Irish National School Teachers.

Mr. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the salary of the teacher of Lisseycasey National School, Roll number 10,321, Circuit 17, Section A, which has an average attendance of 104·8 pupils, the inspector's report for past year good, and the teacher trained with special distinction, is only at the rate of £56 per annum; and, if so, will he say if this teacher has received the special consideration promised to such teachers when the new scheme of paying teachers was issued; and what approximately would be his salary under the superseded rules.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I am informed by the Board of National Education that this teacher was appointed for the first time as a recognised teacher of a National School on the 9th October, 1902, and that, like all teachers on first appointment, he was granted £56 per annum consolidated salary and residual capitation grant, or a total of about £72 per annum. He will not be eligible for an increase of salary under the rules until he has served for three years from the date mentioned. No special consideration was promised to such teachers when the new scheme was issued. He might have earned £110 per annum had the old rules remained in force, but that would have been practically maximum and was liable to serious fluctuation, whereas his present income is progressive by triennial increments and promotion, and may reach over £200 per annum.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will consider the advisability of allowing the salaries of National school teachers to be paid monthly instead of quarterly as they are at present.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I would refer to my reply, to which I have nothing to add, to the similar Question of my hon. friend the Member for North Down, dated 17th November, 1902†.

Condition of Warders' Rooms and Service in Tullamore Gaol.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the intern warders of Tullamore Prison have to sleep in a damp room without fire or heating pipes; that the dampness has been caused by the stoppage of rain-water on the roof; that these warders are locked up in this room at 10 o'clock each night until roll-call the next morning without any means of communication with the governor or chief warder in case of emergency; that the same warders are compelled to sleep in a room in the invalid ward when they are off duty, both before and after night duty, thereby depriving them of the comfort of the beds they had to procure at their own expense when joining the service; that the officer on night duty has to perform nine hours' duty, viz., from 9.45 p.m. till 6.45 a.m. on the following morning, having during that time to mark tell-tale clock every fifteen minutes and fire two furnaces during that period without any relief or the means of preparing food; and, if so, whether he will make inquiries into these matters with a view to having them remedied.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Prisons Board reports that the room in which the intern warders sleep is perfectly dry and comfortable; that on grounds of health fires are not allowed in warders' bedrooms except in severe weather; that on no occasion have the warders been locked up in this room, and that the means of communication with the night guard in case of emergency are adequate; that warders returning off night duty are allowed to rest in a room specially furnished for the purpose, an arrangement of which they have never complained and which was made in order to conduce to their own comfort; that the hours and duties of the night guard are common to all prisons and entail no grievance or hardship; that the night guard at Tullamore Prison has access to the kitchen and every facility for preparing food.

Accumulated Funds in Hands of Crown Agents.

Mr. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton): To ask the Secretary of State for the

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxiv, 1127.

Colonies, if he will state what is the amount of the accumulated funds in the hands of the Crown Agents for the Colonies, whether it is a constantly growing amount, and whether it is under the control of the Colonial Office; and, if not, of whom.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) About £350,000. Yes. Yes.

Ordinances and Regulations for Introduction of Coolie Labour in Crown Colonies.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, if he will state what Ordinances and regulations are now in force in self-governing or Crown Colonies respecting the introduction therein of coolie labour from India, and the dates of such Ordinances; and whether the Ordinance and regulations now under consideration for the Transvaal Colony have been submitted to the Indian Government.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The dates of the Ordinances and Laws are as follows: — British Guiana $\frac{1825}{1891}$ $\frac{16}{94}$ $\frac{6}{95}$ $\frac{11}{95}$ $\frac{27}{00}$ $\frac{19}{01}$; Jamaica $\frac{23}{79}$ $\frac{1}{81}$ $\frac{3}{83}$ $\frac{18}{86}$ $\frac{4}{89}$ $\frac{14}{91}$ $\frac{20}{91}$ $\frac{22}{96}$ $\frac{12}{97}$ $\frac{13}{97}$ $\frac{2}{99}$ $\frac{13}{03}$; Fiji $\frac{2}{91}$ $\frac{3}{92}$ $\frac{4}{92}$ $\frac{6}{92}$ $\frac{8}{92}$ $\frac{14}{93}$ $\frac{4}{94}$ $\frac{12}{95}$ $\frac{1}{96}$ $\frac{6}{98}$ $\frac{7}{98}$; Trinidad $\frac{19}{99}$ $\frac{2}{02}$ $\frac{33}{02}$; Saint Vincent $\frac{24}{80}$ $\frac{9}{86}$; Saint Lucia $\frac{4}{91}$ $\frac{2}{95}$ $\frac{8}{96}$ $\frac{1}{97}$; Natal $\frac{20}{74}$ $\frac{1}{76}$ $\frac{15}{80}$ $\frac{25}{91}$ $\frac{37}{94}$ $\frac{17}{95}$ $\frac{34}{95}$ $\frac{14}{97}$ $\frac{28}{97}$ $\frac{19}{98}$ $\frac{21}{98}$ $\frac{1}{00}$ $\frac{48}{01}$ $\frac{17}{02}$ $\frac{2}{03}$; Mauritius $\frac{12}{78}$ $\frac{1}{79}$ $\frac{21}{82}$ $\frac{6}{84}$ $\frac{51}{99}$ $\frac{26}{03}$. The Colonial Governments are being requested to supply information as to regulations under these enactments, and a Return will be laid before the House in accordance with the promise given to the hon. Member for Central Sheffield. In reply to the last part of the right hon. Member's Question, I have to refer to the answer given on 11th February by the Secretary of State for India to the Member for East Perthshire†

Increase of Pay to Joiners in the Royal William Victualling yard.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the fact that the joiners in the Naval Ordnance Depôt have now been granted a similar increase of pay to that given to the joiners in Devonport Dockyard, a like concession will now be made to the joiners in the Royal William Victualling Yard.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The question of granting an increase of pay to the carpenters in the Victualling Yards (to whom the hon. Member probably refers) is now under consideration, and I shall be very glad to inform him of the decision as soon as it is arrived at.

Publication of War Office Reconstruction Committee's Report.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, having regard to the fact that a communication was made to him asking whether there was any objection to the publication of the Report of the War Office Reconstruction Committee, and that in response to that communication that Report was published by him, by whom was that communication made.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I have no statement to make as to a proceeding which was quite regular, and for which I have already accepted full responsibility.

Parliament and the Taxation of Food.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether he is prepared to give the House an assurance that His Majesty's Government will abstain from proposing to Parliament any measure involving protective duties or the taxation of food.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) It is not proposed to deal with the fiscal question during the currency of the present Parliament, and the declared policy of His Majesty's Government does not, as the hon. Member is well aware, include the taxation of food.

Russian Warships and Neutral Ports.

MR. LAWSON WALTON (Leeds, S.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the use which has recently or is now being made of the ports of Candia (Crete), Suez, and Port

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix., 1020

Said, by Russian warships, he will consider the desirability of communicating to neutral Powers possessing territory upon the seaboard of the trade routes between Great Britain and the East, particularly upon the Mediterranean and Red Sea, the views of His Majesty's Government in reference to the duties of neutrals in regard to the treatment of ships of war of belligerent States which may seek to use neutral ports in connection with the operation of intercepting the trading ships of neutral Powers.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) The hon. Member's Question raises points of great international importance which are receiving the attention of His Majesty's Government.

Introduction of Government Alien Immigration Bill.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will state when the Bill regulating the immigration of aliens, referred to in the King's Speech as the first Government measure of the session, will be introduced.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I hope the Bill may be introduced without any great delay.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Military Materiel in South Africa.

MR. SEYMOUR ORMSBY-GORE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what are the numbers of gun carriages, ammunition and transport wagons, in South Africa; and how many of them are in such a condition of repair as to render them available for immediate service.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): It is not usual or expedient to give detailed information of the nature alluded to in the Question. I can, however, assure the House that all necessary steps have been taken to make the equipments mentioned available for immediate service.

Inoculation of Troops against Enteric Fever.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state how many of the officers and men who died in South Africa from enteric fever had been inoculated against that disease; and what is the purport of the reports of the Medical Army Corps as to the success, or otherwise, of the process.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The examination of the medical records of the South African war has involved enormous labour, and is not sufficiently advanced to enable me to give the statistics asked for. The question of anti-enteric inoculation has been referred to a special Committee. It is one of great interest and will on no account be neglected. If at a later stage I can give the hon. Member the information he asks for I will do so.

Strength of the Volunteer Force.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what was the strength of the Volunteer Force on 1st January, 1903, on 31st October, 1903, and 1st January, 1904; what was the strength of Volunteer officers (combatant) on 31st October, 1903, and 1st February, 1904; and how many vacant commissions are there in the force.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The figures are as follows: All ranks, 1st January, 1903, 250,990; 31st October, 1903, 253,284; 1st January, 1904, 241,280. Officers, 31st October, 1903, 7,215; 1st February, 1904, 7,097. At the present date there are 2,385 vacant commissions (combatant), including 182 seconded and supernumerary officers.

Military Expenditure.

SIR CHARLES WELBY (Nottinghamshire, Newark): On behalf of the hon. Member for Hythe, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state the nature and amount of the expenditure sanctioned by the Treasury to which reference is made in Section 3, paragraph 15, War Office (Reconstitution) Report, Part II.; and whether such expenditure was disapproved of by the military advisers of the War Office.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: There is no Report of the evidence taken by the War Office (Reconstitution) Committee, but I understand that the statement in the Report refers to the erection of a central office at the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, which was recommended by an independent Committee, concurred in by the Director-General of Ordnance and approved by the Secretary of State. It appears that there was a difference of opinion between the Military and the Finance Departments as to the source from which the funds should be provided. The Secretary of State, after carefully considering the question, accepted the view of the Finance Branch. The amount involved was £55,000.

Sir CHARLES WELBY: Are we to understand that the military authorities approved of the erection of these buildings?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that the erection or non-erection of the buildings was not the question. The point was the source from which the money could be obtained and the account in which it could be charged.

War Office Council.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the patent constituting the new War Office Council was issued upon the recommendation of the Prime Minister, after consultation with the Committee of Defence and with the Cabinet; and what was the date when the Cabinet approved of the appointment of the Council.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The patent was issued in accordance with the advice of His Majesty's Government. It would not be usual, nor do I consider it desirable, to state in detail, the preliminary steps that were taken. The War Office Council was appointed with the full approval of His Majesty's Government.

War Office Financial Administration.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, do His Majesty's Government propose to adopt the financial system recommended by the Report, Part II., of the War Office (Reconstitution) Committee, under which, subject to the control of the Army Council, the military members of the Council will be responsible for the administration of their respective Votes, and similar responsibility will be vested in General Officers for the administration of all sums allocated to their respective commands.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: As the House has recently been informed, Part II. of the Report is under the consideration of the Government.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Do I understand that no decision has yet been arrived at?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes, Sir.

New War Office Appointments.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Director of Operations and the Director of Military Training at headquarters, recently appointed, hold the offices recommended under Part II. of the War Office (Reorganisation) scheme, and how much of Part II. has been adopted by His Majesty's Government; and are the salaries of the above officers borne on the Estimates of the ensuing year.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The officers in question hold the offices recommended under Part II. of the War Office (Reconstitution) scheme, though pending the formal adoption of the Report, or such parts of it as may be finally accepted the exact allocation of duties to the respective officers is liable to review. The salaries of these officers will be met out of the salaries voted for the officers whose appointments they replace.

Mr. BUCHANAN: Are the salaries of either of these officers included in the present Vote?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: It has been explained in the course of the debates that the salaries will be provided from the sums voted for the officers they replaced.

Mr. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what is the reason of the omission from his Memorandum on the Army Estimates of all mention of the important changes and new charges placed on the Estimates for the salaries of the Army Council, the Inspector General, and other officers appointed in consequence of the adoption of Part I. of the War Office (Reconstitution) scheme by the Government.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The Memorandum was what it purported to be—merely an explanation of the figures given in the Estimates. I think I shall be able during the course of my explanation this afternoon to give an answer to the hon. Member which he will regard as satisfactory.

Military Telegraph Pole Contract.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, having regard to the fact that, under a War Office letter dated the 14th October, 1902, the Treasury was induced to assent to £1,321 10s. being paid as compensation for the cancellation of contracts for telegraph poles for South Africa, valued at £4,644, will he state whether, before suggesting the cancellation of the contracts at this cost, any efforts were made to ascertain whether the poles would be of service to the Post Office Telegraphs with a view to the transfer of the contracts to that Department.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The poles were specially provided for the field telegraph, and were not suitable for the purposes of the General Post Office.

Naval Strength—Two-Power Standard.

Mr. YERBURGH (Chester): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the total number of battleships actually laid down from and including the year 1889 to the end of February in this year by Great Britain, counting in the Chilian ships, is fifty, by France twenty-two, by Russia twenty-six, by Germany twenty-seven; is he aware that while we propose a programme of two battleships the Russian programme embraces four battleships, and the German programme two battleships; and whether the Admiralty, for the purposes of the two-Power standard, takes into account any ships other than battleships.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge): The numbers stated in my hon. friend's Question are correct. The two-Power standard has reference to battleships only, whether of this or foreign countries.

Naval Manœuvres—Blockades.

Mr. YERBURGH: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state whether any evidence has been obtained from the experiences of naval manœuvres subsequent to those of 1888 which tends to establish the general correctness of the opinion expressed by Admirals Sir W. Dowell, Sir R. Vesey Hamilton, and Sir F. Richards, in their Report on the 1888 manœuvres, that to maintain an effective blockade of an enemy's squadrons in strongly fortified ports the blockading battleships must be in proportion of five to three, and that the proportion of fast cruisers employed in blockading should not be less than two to one of the blockaded.

Mr. PRETYMAN: Although the opinion of the Admirals quoted was well founded at the time it was formulated, the subsequent development of torpedo craft of all sorts, including submarines, renders it necessary to regard the whole question of blockade from a different standpoint to that on which they based their calculation. Blockades, if conducted at all in the future, must be arranged on other principles than those then advocated. The figures quoted by my hon. friend can no longer be regarded as applicable.

German Navy.

Mr. YERBURGH: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state what was the strength of the German Navy in first and second-class battleships completed and building in 1895; what is its present strength; at what date the current shipbuilding programme of Germany will be completed; and what will then be the strength of its Navy in the said ships.

MR. PRETYMAN: The strength of the German Navy in battleships in 1898 was five first-class battleships, four second-class, and twelve third-class, or twenty-one battleships in all. Its present strength is fourteen first-class battleships, four second-class, and twelve third-class, or thirty battleships in all. The current German shipbuilding programme will be completed in 1920, when the total number of battleships will be fifty-five, including seventeen which will then be twenty-five years old or upwards.

MR. YERBURGH: My Question was as to 1895. I will accept the figures for 1898, however.

Cotton Cultivation in British North Borneo.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether His Majesty's Government have any information in regard to the suitability of British North Borneo for the cultivation of cotton.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): I have ascertained from the British North Borneo Company that no Europeans have so far grown cotton in North Borneo, but that favourable reports on samples of native cotton have been received. The company consider that the soil and climate of North Borneo are well suited for the cultivation of cotton; and they state that plenty of cheap labour is available, and that the directors are willing to do all in their power to encourage its growth. For further particulars I must refer the hon. Member to the company.

Transvaal Labour Ordinance—No Time Limit.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, before sanctioning the Ordinance for the introduction of Chinese indentured labour into the Transvaal, he will insert a clause naming a date at which such importation shall cease.

*MR. LYTTELTON: No, Sir.

MAJOR SEELY: Am I to understand that the Government have abandoned their intention of making this importation of a temporary nature as promised in the course of the debate on the subject?

*MR. SPEAKER: That Question is irregular, inasmuch as it has reference to a debate of the present session, and, therefore, cannot be asked.

White Unskilled Labour in the Transvaal Mines.

MAJOR SEELY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the fact that more than half of the total annual production of gold in the world is produced by white labour only, he will cause inquiry to be instituted into the possibility of the further employment of white labour in the gold mines of the Transvaal before sanctioning the Ordinance for the introduction of Chinese indentured labour into that colony.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I do not know whether the fact alleged as to the world at large by my gallant friend is accurate or inaccurate, but I am convinced by the evidence which I have received from South Africa, where, in the words of the right hon. Member for Aberdeen, "all unskilled work is done by black people," it is not practicable to employ white labour on unskilled work in the mines. I must therefore decline to give the undertaking suggested.

Racial Problems in the Transvaal.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what course the Government is to pursue with reference to children of Chinese or mixed white and black and Chinese parentage born in the Transvaal; are they to be allowed to remain in South Africa, or are they to be sent to China; and, can he form any estimate as to the probable number of such children per thousand of the adult male Chinese introduced.

*MR. LYTTELTON: In answer to the first and second Questions I do not anticipate that under the conditions proposed children of mixed parentage will be born. As to the third I am quite unable to follow the hon. Member into the bewildering speculation suggested by his imagination.

Chinese Labour—Transfer Regulations.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of Despatch 21, of 21st February, from Viscount Milner to the Colonial Secretary, published in a Blue-book just presented to Parliament, and to the statement in paragraph 4 of said Despatch that if the consent of the Chinese labourer to a transfer of his services were insisted on this might make the Ordinance in regard to the introduction of Chinese labour into the Transvaal of little value, coupled with the fact that the draft Ordinance received 27th February and published in the same Blue-book contains no obligation to obtain this assent from the labourer, and also, in view of Despatch 23, of 23rd February, from the Colonial Secretary to Viscount Milner, in which he states that His Majesty's Government has undertaken to secure that transfer from one employer to another shall be with the consent of the labourer, any reply from Viscount Milner has been received to this intimation; and if the assent of His Majesty's Government will not be given to the Ordinance until it has been altered in this respect, or, if not, how is the pledge given by His Majesty's Government to be carried out.

***Mr LYTTELTON**: Though the matter was not wholly free from doubt I do not read the Despatch of Lord Milner referred to in the sense which the hon. Member has placed on it. I understand Lord Milner to mean that the contract should be made in China between the labourer and the Labour Association of the Witwatersrand; and that the Association should apportion the labourers to the several mines on their arrival in the Transvaal. I think that subsequent allocations into which no element of pecuniary consideration was to be permitted to enter would have been adequately safeguarded by the statutory supervision of the Lieutenant-Governor, a precaution which reflects the recent precedents in Colonial Ordinances dealing with coolie immigration which have been sanctioned by both Parties of the State. But to make quite certain I gave the definite pledge referred to; Lord Milner has fully responded to it, and it will be embodied in the regulations before assent is given to the Ordinance.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Will Lord Milner's Despatch be laid on the Table.

***Mr. LYTTELTON**: I think not.

Labour Transfers.

Mr. SEELY (Lincoln): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the fact that the alteration made in Section 11 of the Transvaal Labour Ordinance was intended to enable Chinese labourers to be transferred to an employer without their own consent on payment of a money consideration; and will he state what steps he proposes to take to ensure that the Transvaal Legislative Council shall not be allowed to carry out this intention, and whether he intends to allow the administration of the Ordinance to be entirely in the hands of the Transvaal authorities.

***Mr. LYTTELTON**: I would refer my hon. friend to my Answer to the hon. Member for Northampton.

Mr. SEELY asked if it were not the fact that the sum to be paid had been stated at something over £20 ?

***Mr. LYTTELTON** referred the hon. Member to the Blue-book, and repeated that he had satisfactory assurances from Lord Milner on the subject.

Labour Contracts in Transvaal Mines.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what would be the position of an indentured Chinese labourer in the Transvaal, with a wife or wives and children, who declared his wish to return to China before the expiration of his term of servitude, if he had not the means to return with or without his family; would he and they be obliged to remain in the Transvaal and to work in the mines.

***Mr. LYTTELTON**: The labourer will have to carry out his contract, and continue to work to obtain the means of defraying the return passage of himself and family. It is not intended that the wife and children should be employed on work in the mines.

Repatriation of Chinese Children.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to a statement of the Attorney-General of the Transvaal Colony that the children of Chinese subjects imported into the Transvaal Colony, under the provisions of the Transvaal Labour Importation Ordinance, 1904, born in the Transvaal Colony will be British subjects; and, if so, will he take steps to secure that such children can be repatriated under the above-mentioned Ordinance, or under the Transvaal Peace Preservation Ordinance; and will he lay the Transvaal Peace Preservation Ordinance, referred to on page 81 of Further Correspondence regarding the Transvaal Labour Question [Cd. 1941] upon the Table.

MR. LYTTELTON: My attention has been drawn to the statement referred to, and as a question of law it is no doubt correct, but inasmuch as no child can be older than six at the time when the question of repatriation arises, I do not see how any practical difficulty is likely to arise under Section 33 (2) of the Ordinance, which will apply. The Peace Preservation Ordinance will be included in the next Parliamentary Paper on the subject. Meanwhile, I will cause a copy to be placed in the Library.

Alien Labour in Rhodesia.

MR. CHARLES ALLEN (Gloucestershire, Stroud): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Legislative Council of Southern Rhodesia has within the last two or three years passed any legislation dealing with the admission of alien labour into Rhodesia; whether such legislation received the sanction of the Colonial Office; and, if so, whether, under it, Chinese labour can be introduced into Rhodesia.

MR. LYTTELTON: I would refer the hon. Member to the Ordinance No. 18 of 1901, printed at page 113 of Cd. 1200, which was amended by an Ordinance No. 3 of 1902 in accordance with the pledges given at page 128 of the same Blue-book. Chinese labour can be introduced into Southern Rhodesia as soon as the necessary notice has been issued with the consent and approval of the High Commissioner, and with the sanction of the Secretary of State.

Coolie Labour in the West Indies.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can lay upon the Table a copy of the Order in Council issued by Lord Glenelg, Liberal Secretary of State in 1837, permitting West Indian planters to ship coolies from India, together with the Reports on the subject referred to in the Resolution of the late right hon. W. E. Gladstone, in 1840, and mentioned in the "Life of Gladstone" by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Montrose Burghs; and if he can inform the House how many similar Ordinances have been sanctioned with regard to indentured labour, and in what years they were passed.

MR. LYTTELTON: As the hon. Member has already moved for a Return of the Orders in Council as regards indentured labour from India now in force in British colonies, and I hope soon to be able to lay it on the Table, I do not think it is necessary to give a transcript of the Orders on the subject at so remote a date as 1837. With regard to the second part of the Question, I am unable to trace the Resolution in the records of the Colonial Office.

Australian Governor-General and Preferential Tariffs.

MR. FLYNN (Cork Co., N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that Lord Northcote, Governor-General of the Australian Commonwealth, in opening the Federal Parliament on Wednesday, declared that preferential tariffs would secure to Australia an immense and stable market; and, if so, will he say if the Governor-General made this declaration with the consent and approval of His Majesty's Government; and, if not, what communication will the Government address to Lord Northcote.

MR. LYTTELTON: I have seen the statement referred to by the hon. Member in the Press. The Ministers of the Crown in Australia are solely responsible for the speech made by the Governor-General at the opening of the Legislature, and I see no reason for addressing any communication to Lord Northcote on the subject.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): May I ask whether, in view of the fact that partisan references to controversial topics are never included in the Speech from the Throne in this country, the right hon. Gentleman will call the attention of the Governor-General to that fact.

Mr. LYTTELTON: I have no reason to alter my Answer.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to answer my Question and save me the trouble of bringing the matter up on the Estimates?

[No answer was returned.]

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: All right.

British Resident at Mysore.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state what was the previous experience in political service of the Bengal civilian who three months ago took up the appointment of British Resident in Mysore; how many officers in the first and second grades of the Government of India's Political Department will be superseded or set back by this appointment from outside that service; is this gentleman, the new Resident at Bengalore, identical with the Bengal revenue officer who in October, 1899, when Commissioner of the Patna Division, sought to interfere with the action of the Sessions Judge in a case then pending in the Court at Chupra; and, if so, what is the explanation for this appointment.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): The appointment of a civil servant, without previous service in the Political Department, to the office of Resident in Mysore is in accordance with precedent, and the officers in the Political Department are not thereby superseded. It is the fact that Sir James Bourdillon was Commissioner of the Patna Division in 1899, but his conduct was not reflected on in this matter by his superiors. He has since officiated for more than a year as Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, from which high office he was transferred to the Residentship of Mysore, on the ground that he was the fittest person for the post.

Tibet Mission.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the prohibition by the Government of India Act, 1858, of the application of the revenues of India to defray the expenses of any military operation carried on beyond the external frontiers of India, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, he will explain why the revenues of India have been applied to defray the expenses of military operations in Tibet without such consent having been obtained; and when do His Majesty's Government intend to ask for that consent.

Mr. BRODRICK: I informed the hon. Member on the 4th February† that no military operations have been undertaken in connection with the Mission. The fact that an escort accompanies the Mission does not necessitate any action under Section 55 of the Government of India Act of 1858.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in to-day's newspapers it is stated that fighting is imminent? Will not that be a military operation?

[No answer was returned.]

Assouan Dam.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state the increased area of land which has been brought into cultivation by means of the Assouan dam; and whether it is proposed to make any alteration in the dam such as will admit of a greater storage of water.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.): It is understood that up to the end of last year 170,000 acres of land had been brought under perennial irrigation as a result of the construction of the dams at Assouan and Assiout. The Egyptian Government have not at present considered any proposal for making alterations in the Assouan dam.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix., 338.

The Servian Regicides.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to resume diplomatic relations with Servia in the near future; and whether it has been ascertained whether those responsible for the murder of the late King and Queen have in any way been brought to justice.

Earl PERCY: We are not aware that any steps have been taken to bring to justice those who were responsible for the murder of the late King and Queen of Servia, or to express public abhorrence of the crime. In these circumstances it is not possible to make any statement as to the prospect of a renewal of diplomatic relations.

South African Railway Debt.

*Mr. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that Lord Milner, in his presidential address to the extraordinary session of the Intercolonial Council for the Transvaal and Orange River States, admitted the claim of Great Britain for £1,250,000 on account of the Imperial military railways of South Africa; and whether, in view of the fact that this House has voted £900,000 in settlement of the account for the repairs of these lines, he will now press the Intercolonial Council for the prompt payment of the £1,250,000 above referred to.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): For the reasons which I have already given to the House I do not think it would be desirable or possible to adopt the hon. Member's suggestion.

Mr. AINSWORTH. Is the right hon. Gentleman prepared to lay Papers before the House so that we may understand how the matter stands?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have no Papers to lay.

National Debt Reduction.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has observed the statement of his predecessor in introducing the Budget last year that 6·6 millions would be available for the reduction of debt; whether he can now inform the House if, after providing for the capital expenditure involved in the Army, Navy, and Civil Service Estimates, the total indebtedness of the country would be reduced by this sum or by any sum during the present financial year; and, if not, whether he will undertake in the next financial statement to make provision for the expenditure of all kinds, so that official statements made with regard to total national outlay and indebtedness might be complete and accurate.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Questions which the hon. Member raises cannot be answered till the close of the financial year, nor do I think that it would in any case be desirable that I should anticipate the financial statement which it will be my duty to make at the usual time.

Scottish Steel Combine.

Mr. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to a recent combination of Scottish steel makers, whereby a minimum price with heavy penalties has been fixed for Scotland, while these makers are delivering steel at lower prices in the Midlands; and, if so, whether the Government intend to take any steps to protect English steel makers against this form of competition.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): I am aware of the combination alluded to in the Question. The matter is not one which seems to call for any action on the part of the Government.

*Mr. SPEAKER: This is the Question which on Thursday last the hon. Member complained had been made incomprehensible by an alteration made at the Table without notice to him. I promised at the time to make inquiry. I have done so. I have ascertained that the Clerks at the Table did inform the hon. Member formally of the alteration they were making. I have seen the manuscript, and I find that the Question was rendered incomprehensible, not by any alteration made at the Table, but by the omission on the part of the printers of a certain word. I think when the hon. Member saw the Question on the Notice Paper, and before he made a charge publicly in this House against the Clerks, he should have communicated privately with me, then he would have obtained this explanation.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR thanked Mr. Speaker for his courtesy. Of course, he had dealt only with the Question on the Paper, and he hoped the printers would be more careful in future.

Gambling in Foodstuffs.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has any official information showing that the rise in the price of bread is owing to the gambling in futures in the wheat markets; and, if so, whether he will make inquiries with a view to international co-operation to prevent corners in foodstuffs.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Answer is in the negative.

Longford Postal Supervision.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will explain why Longford town and county post offices have been placed under the charge of the surveyors of the Ulster district instead of, as hitherto, under Dublin and Sligo district; and whether any economy was the result of this change.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (LORD STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): Longford and other towns served by the Mullingar and Sligo Branch of the Midland Railway were recently transferred from the control of the Surveyor of the Midland District to the control of the Surveyor of the Northern District in order to equalise as far as possible the size of the two Districts with a view to promoting greater efficiency and economy.

Swansea Education Authority.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether correspondence has taken place between the Board of Education and the Council of the County Borough of Swansea in reference to the making by the council, and the approval by the Board, of a scheme for the establishing of an education committee for the County Borough of Swansea, under the 17th Section of the Education Act, 1902; and whether he will lay the correspondence upon the Table at an early date.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): Some correspondence has passed between the Board of Education and the County Borough of Swansea in reference to an Education Committee. This correspondence is in the hands of the Swansea Borough Council, and there seems no occasion for publishing it. I shall be happy to show to the hon. Member any letter which he may desire to see.

Non-Provided School Maintenance in Glamorganshire.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether correspondence has taken place between the Board of Education and the education committee of the Glamorgan County Council in reference to the maintenance of the non-provided or voluntary public elementary schools in the county of Glamorgan; and, if so, whether he will lay the correspondence on the Table at an early date.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: Correspondence between the Board of Education and the education committee of the Glamorgan County Council has taken place on the subject referred to. As this correspondence is still continuing it would not be desirable to lay it on the Table at the present time at all events.

Carmarthen County Council and the Education Act.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether the Board of Education have made an Order for an inquiry, under Section 16 of the Education Act, 1902, as to alleged breaches of duty by the County Council of Carmarthenshire in administering the Act; if so, what are the terms of reference to the person or persons appointed or to be appointed to conduct the inquiry; and can he state the name or names of the person or persons who is or are to conduct the inquiry.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: I shall have pleasure in handing to the hon. Member a copy of the printed notice which is in course of publication and which contains the answer to all the points in the hon. Member's Question.

Glycerinated Calf Lymph for Scotland.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the proposal to establish a station in Scotland for the preparation of glycerinated calf lymph has yet been considered; and, if so, will he state the nature of the decision arrived at.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): So long as the general arrangements now existing between England and Scotland remain as at present, I see no necessity for adopting the course suggested by the hon. Member.

Prevention of Illegal Trawling.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will consider the expediency of introducing legislation at an early date such as will render the penalties for illegal trawling of a more deterrent nature than at present.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The question raised by the hon. Member is receiving my consideration, but the matter is complicated and I am not prepared at present to undertake on behalf of the Government to introduce a Bill in the direction indicated.

Window Smashing in Dublin.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the proceedings in the Dublin Police Court on Wednesday last, when five cases of window breaking were heard and disposed of; and if the Government intend to give effect to the declaration of the presiding magistrate that something should be done by legislation to abate the mischief.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): The matter is under consideration.

Alleged Perjury by Policemen at Ballinrobe.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General fo Ireland whether he has yet received the necessary information to enable him to prosecute the two policemen whose evidence was of such a character that the magistrates at the Ballinrobe petty sessions recently unanimously dismissed the charges which they brought against a publican named Faby; and, if not, whether he can say at what date he will be able to take proceedings against these officers of the law.

MR. ATKINSON: I have already directed that a prosecution for perjury should be instituted against these policemen.

Waterville (Kerry) Proposed National School.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.); I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that repeated applications have been made to the Commissioners of National Education for the erection of a school at Waterville, county Kerry, and that a suitable site has now been obtained; and, if so, in view of the fact that a number of Roman Catholic children in the village cannot be educated through want of the proper facilities, and that the Roman Catholic population is increasing, will the Commissioners now sanction a building grant.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover); I am informed that the Commissioners declined to make a grant in this case, because, in their opinion, the educational requirements of Waterville can be effectively met by enlarging the schools at Spunkane in the same district.

Kerry Railway Guarantees.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in calculating the amount annually contributed to Kerry in relief of railway charges, he included a sum of £4,067, portion of the proceeds of the Limerick and Kerry Railway, money which is not a Government grant; and, if so, whether this county, half of which is congested, is paying for railway guarantees alone about 1s. per £.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The sum mentioned was taken into account in making the calculation. It represents a refund in respect of guarantees paid in the past for the Limerick and Kerry Railway. The poundage rate required to pay the net charge against each guaranteeing area in the county varies, according to the Parliamentary Return No. 376 of 1902, from a fraction of 1d. to 10d.

Rae Estate, Keel, County Kerry.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board has received a proposal for purchase from the tenants of the Rae Estate, Keel, county Kerry; and whether any steps have been taken with a view to have the estate bought.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The Board will make an offer for the purchase of this estate in the Land Judge's Court.

Agricultural Distress in Ireland.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the loss of crops and farm produce generally in consequence of the bad harvest in Ireland; and will he say whether any effort will be made by the Board of Agriculture to introduce new seed into Ireland and assist farmers who may be unable to obtain seeds of a good quality to procure the same on easy terms of repayment.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The Department of Agriculture does not consider it desirable to take the steps suggested. On the 3rd February I stated, in answer to a Question by the hon. Member for North Roscommon,† that having consulted the Local Government Board on the subject it was not considered that there were sufficient grounds for introducing legislation with the object mentioned.

Drainage of the Inny.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, can he state whether any complaint has been made to the Board of Works of the choked condition of the River Inny, in the vicinity of the town of Ballymahon; who is the superintendent in charge of the drainage district; how often does he get the outlets of the tributary streams cleaned up, and whether he gives any regular contracts for the work; and whether, as floods are constantly occurring in the district, an inquiry into the management of the drainage will be made.

Mr. WYNDHAM: That portion of the river at Ballymahon is not in a drainage district. No such complaints have been made to the Commissioners of Public Works, who have no information on the second, third and fourth Questions. The Commissioners have called upon the trustees of the Inny Drainage District to maintain their works in proper condition, and have informed them that in default of their doing so the Commissioners will themselves take action.

Mohill Loan Fund Board—Election of Clerk.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the present election of a clerk to the Mohill Loan Fund Board will be sanctioned by the Loan Fund Board in Dublin, having regard to the fact that the election was conducted irregularly, and a formal protest against the action of one of the candidates in presiding during a portion of the proceedings lodged.

Mr. WYNDHAM: No, Sir; a fresh election has been ordered.

Longford County Police.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland by how many men the police force of county Longford has been reduced since 1st April, 1899; whether the county is now contributing anything for extra police over and above the normal number of former years; how many police barracks have been closed; and whether, in these cases, it is proposed to dispose of the barracks or keep them for further contingencies.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix, 192.

MR. WYNDHAM: There has been no reduction. There is no extra force in the county at present, consequently no local contribution is payable. One barrack was closed and surrendered to the owner of the premises.

Irish Education—Intergrade Teachers.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many intergrade teachers were in the service of the National Board on the 31st August, 1903; how many were promoted to the second grade, how many to the first grade, and how many to the first division of the first grade; will the National Board consider the claims of National teachers for promotion who in 1901 promoted all their pupils, though it was the year the revised programme took effect, and were awarded fair; will intergrade teachers who have been promoted to a higher grade lose a year's salary by making their promotion date from the 1st April, 1904, instead of the 1st April, 1903, like all other teachers who have got increments; how many intergrade teachers have not been promoted; and will they be given another opportunity of promotion.

MR. WYNDHAM: One thousand nine hundred and eight, of whom 332 were promoted to the second grade, thirty-eight to the second division of the first grade, and twenty-three to the first division of the first grade. The promotions were made on the recommendations of the inspectors considered in connection with the departmental records and the reports for three years on the schools. The promotion of intergrade teachers will date, as a rule, from 1st April, 1903. One thousand five hundred and fifteen such teachers have not yet been promoted. The cases of those who are eligible will be considered from time to time.

Clanricarde Estate—Evicted Tenants.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Estates Commissioners have received about 200 applications from evicted tenants on the Clanricarde Estate, county Galway, requesting reinstatement, under the Act of 1903, or equivalent holdings; and, if so, will he now state what has been done towards complying with their request.

MR. WYNDHAM: The number is 117. Inquiries are being made on all estates coming before the Commissioners from the county, with a view to the reinstatement of evicted tenants.

Marquis of Ely's Estate, Fermanagh.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that, as a result of Mr. Justice Ross's decision stopping the sale of the Marquis of Ely's estate in county Fermanagh, the tenants are now being served with ejectments and threatened with eviction unless the full amount of rent, arrears, and costs is forthwith paid; and whether, in view of the amending Bill to be introduced, and the expressed intention of the Marquis of Ely to sell his property to the tenants, he can take steps to delay these proceedings until the amending Bill is passed and negotiations for sale can be renewed.

MR. WYNDHAM: There are no evictions impending on this estate. Proceedings in ejectment have been taken against six tenants for hearing at the April sessions, and a number of Civil Bill processes have been served for the payment of rents and arrears. The Government has no power to intervene in the manner indicated. The Court is empowered to put a stay upon the execution of ejectments.

Irish Queen's Colleges.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether there are any regulations or orders in addition to the Charters of the Queen's Colleges or any of them dealing with the question of the residence of the presidents of the colleges, and whether continued residence on their part is required.

MR. WYNDHAM: There are no orders or regulations, so far as I am aware, dealing with the question of the residence of presidents of the Queen's Colleges. No condition as to residence was made on their appointment.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): As a matter of fact, do any of these gentlemen reside permanently at the Colleges?

MR. WYNDHAM: I believe so in the case of Belfast and Galway, but not in the case of Cork.

Evicted Tenants in County Tipperary.

MR. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many applications from evicted tenants in the county of Tipperary have been received by the Estates Commissioners; and what steps, if any, have been taken by the Estates Commissioners to make provision for them in accordance with the assurances given during the passage of the Land Act, 1903.

MR. WYNDHAM: 158 inquiries are being made on estates coming before the Commissioners from the county, with a view to their reinstatement.

Macroom Labourers' Cottage Scheme Inquiry.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at the recent Local Government Board inquiry into a labourers' cottage scheme held in Macroom there was an application from Richard Fitzgerald for an additional half-acre on the farm of David Buckley, in the townland of Rylane, electoral division of Mountrivers; and, if so, will he state whether there was any objection advanced to this application; and, if so, on what grounds; what is the extent of the farm in question and how many cottages on it; and will he state the recommendation of the Local Government Board inspector in connection with this application.

MR. WYNDHAM: This inquiry only concluded on Monday last. The inspector's report on the scheme, which is a very extensive one, has not yet been received.

MR. SHEEHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at the Local Government Board inquiry into a labourers' cottage scheme for additional half-acres recently held in the Macroom Rural District, one of the councillors for the Candroma electoral division, Mr. Michael Lucey, appeared before the inspector on Monday, 22nd, and requested that his evidence in favour of the scheme should be heard, stating that he had received no official notification of the inquiry, and could not, owing to illness, attend on the first day of the proceedings; and, if so, will he explain on what grounds the inspector refused the evidence of Mr. Lucey at this inquiry.

MR. WYNDHAM: Mr. Lucey's application to be examined could not be acceded to on the 22nd February, for good and sufficient reasons, but he was examined on the 29th.

Irish National Library Staff.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is now in a position to state what action it is proposed to take with reference to the National Library and its staff, in view of the fact that the Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into this matter has presented its Report.

MR. WYNDHAM: The scales of salary of the librarian and his first assistant have been improved; an additional assistant will be appointed; the pay of the attendants has been improved and their number will be increased from twelve to twenty. The arrangements for cataloguing the books are still under consideration.

Irish Pauper Lunatics—P. Morrisey's Case.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that ex-convict Patrick Morrisey, discharged from Maryborough

Prison on the 17th July, 1903, and sent on the same date to the Mountmellick Workhouse, is at present a patient in the Maryborough District Lunatic Asylum, chargeable to the local rates; and whether he will state what steps the Government is going to take to relieve the ratepayers of the King's and Queen's Counties of the burthen of Morrisey's maintenance.

MR. WYNDHAM: The facts are as stated. There is no power to transfer this man to the Central Criminal Lunatic Asylum or to the asylum of the district of which he is a native. Legislation would be necessary to remedy the grievance of which the hon. Member complains, and I cannot give any undertaking in this direction. The usual capitation grant will, of course, be paid in respect of the maintenance of Morrisey in Maryborough Asylum.

Gault Estate, County Tyrone.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what explanation, if any, the solicitor having carriage of the sale of the Gault Estate, Trillick, county Tyrone, has made before the Land Judge in reference to the delay of ten years in the sale of the estate; and if any arrangement has been made to expedite the transfer of the land.

MR. WYNDHAM: The solicitors having carriage of the proceedings appeared before the Court on the 25th February. They satisfied the Land Judge that they were not in default, and that the delay was occasioned by the complexity of the title and inherent difficulties of the case. The Land Judge at the same time urged upon them the necessity of expediting the proceedings as rapidly as possible.

Land Purchase (Ireland) Act, 1903.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of a resolution adopted by the Longford County Council calling for such amendment of the Land Act of 1903 as will restore decadal reductions on tenants' instalments; and whether he proposes to give effect to this resolution in his forthcoming Amendment Bill.

MR. WYNDHAM: I must ask the hon. Member to await the introduction of the Bill. The same remark applies to Questions in the names of the hon. Members for South Sligo and East Cork, as follows:—

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Bill amending the Land Act of 1903, which is to be introduced this session, will contain a clause enabling future tenants to obtain through the Estates Commissioners the right of having their holdings revalued before being required to sign purchase agreements in the case of sales of estates on which they may reside, though forming a small minority of the tenantry.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork Co., E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that negotiations for the sale of estates under the Land Purchase (Ireland) Act, 1903, have been retarded owing to the doubts that exist as to whether the middleman is entitled to the bonus on the gross amount of purchase money agreed upon between him and his tenants, or only on the balance after redeeming the head rent; and, if so, whether he will introduce a clause to make this point clear in the proposed amending Bill.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): As in many cases negotiations are going on where this point is raised, cannot the right hon. Gentleman give some indication of his intention?

[No answer was returned].

Trinity College, Dublin.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Fellows of Trinity College, Dublin, have unanimously memorialised the Crown in favour of the appointment of a Roman Catholic to the vacant provostship; if so, will he ascertain whether the governing body would be agreeable to the appointment of a Roman Catholic clergyman as provost, and when will the vacancy be filled.

Mr. WYNDHAM: No, Sir; no such memorial has been presented.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: In view of the announced desire of the Fellows of Trinity College to attract Catholic students to the college, cannot the right hon. Gentleman see his way to suggest that a Jesuit be appointed to the office of provost?

Mr. WYNDHAM: I do not know that that would greatly facilitate the object in view.

Ballinrobe Alleged Perjury Case.

Mr. JOHN O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether a report was forwarded by any person to the Irish Executive of the alleged perjury of two policemen at the Ballinrobe petty sessions recently, until asked for it; whether such a report, if any, was supplied by the resident magistrate who presided, and who dismissed the case on the merits after first investigating the matter on the spot, the clerk of the petty sessions, or if not by any of these officials, by whom was it furnished; and whether he will give the date on which it reached the quarter where such complaints are usually received.

Mr. WYNDHAM: It formed no part of the duty of the resident magistrate, who is a judicial officer, to make a report on this matter to the Executive. That duty devolved upon and was discharged by the district inspector of constabulary who was present and conducted the prosecution. On the 18th February and again on the 3rd instant, the Government, being desirous of supplementing the facts in its possession, invited the resident magistrate to furnish his observations. The case was dismissed on the 1st of February. The district inspector made his report on the 4th of February, since which date the case has received the attention demanded by its importance. The clerk of petty sessions has no duties to perform in this connection.

Irish Labourers' Cottages.

Mr. SHEEHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state in what manner and from what persons the inspectors of the Land Commission make inquiries as to whether accommodation for labourers is needed on any estates for the purchase of which applications were received under the Irish Land Act, 1903; which is the estate on which the accommodation for labourers is reported to be insufficient but for which no scheme has yet been framed by the Estates Commissioners; and will he give the names and rural areas of the five largest estates on which accommodation is reported to be sufficient.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The inspectors inquire whether accommodation is needed for labourers on the estate. If they are of opinion that the existing house accommodation is insufficient having regard to the ordinary requirements of the district, they are instructed to specify how such accommodation may best be supplied. The information is procured locally. On the estate of Louis Perrin-Hatchell, in county Wexford, it has been reported that the accommodation is insufficient. The other five estates referred to are the Duke of Leinster's, counties Kildare and Meath; L. G. Kemmis, Queen's county; H. C. Gillman, Cork; J. H. Edge, Queen's county; and M. H. Hyndman, Tipperary.

Marine Works, South Donegal.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of a resolution passed by the Killaghtee Branch of the United Irish League on the 28th February, urging the claims of South Donegal Bay to a share of the marine grant for the building of boatslips and landing places for the fishermen on the south side of St. Ulin's Point, especially at Cassan Sound, and for repair at Ballyricard and Ballyethuland, and pressing for some share in the allocation of the remainder of the funds of the Donegal portion of the marine grant for this district which has been overlooked in that allocation; and what steps, if any, will the Government take, having regard to the needs of this locality, to secure for it participation in this grant.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The resolution has been received. In the allocation of the grant preference was given to works according to their relative importance and after consultation with representatives of the county council. I cannot hold out any hope that a further allocation will be made in respect of the particular works mentioned in the Question.

North Tipperary Land Court.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that there are a number of cases listed for the past four years for the Head Land Commission from the district of North Tipperary, he will say when the Court will again sit to hear these cases.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Commissioners inform me that no date has been fixed for the next sitting of the Court for the hearing of fair rent appeals from this district. The last list disposed of by the Commissioners comprised all cases in which appeals were lodged prior to the 1st January, 1901.

Sporting Rights on the Clanricarde Estate.

MR. ROCHE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the tenants of the townland of Derrygoolan, county Galway, on the Clanricarde Estate, who asserted their claims to the sporting rights, have in consequence been processed, some for the hanging gale, being the only rent alleged to be due, and others served with notices to quit; whether, in view of the circumstances of the proceeding and the nature of the past season, he will undertake that the forces of the Crown will not be used in the execution of any decrees thus obtained.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have no information on the first part of the Question. The Government has no power to give an undertaking such as suggested at the end of the Question.

Licence Duty.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state what was the gross amount of licence duty for the year ended 31st March, 1903, obtained from licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors, tobacco, and plate, and to carry on the businesses of pawnbroker, auctioneer, appraiser, hawker, and refreshment house keeper, in England and Scotland, respectively; the net amount paid over to the county and borough councils in respect to such licences in England and Scotland, respectively; the gross amount obtained from similar licences for the same period in the case of Ireland; whether these licence duties are allocated to the county and borough councils in which they accrue in the case of England and Scotland; and, if so, will he explain why the same rule of allocation is not followed in the case of Ireland.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): The figures desired by the hon. Member are set out in the Annual Reports of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue. An amount equivalent to the net yield of the Local Taxation Licences in Ireland is annually paid out of the Consolidated Fund to the Local Taxation Account at the Bank of Ireland under Section 58 of the Act 61–62, Vict. c. 37.

Board of Works Estate, County Galway.

MR. ROCHE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Board of Works are prepared to receive an offer of purchase from their tenants at Meelick, Eyrecourt, county Galway, under the provisions of the Land Act of 1903.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: No, Sir: the Act does not apply to this class of tenancy.

Limerick Fisheries.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is now in a position to supply the information asked for on the 30th July, 1903, as to how much money was paid to owners of fishery rights since the year 1834 between Castle Connell and the Lax Weir at Limerick, giving the parts of the river claimed for and the names of the claimants, whether for partial or total loss, and the amount given in each case, also the names of those who were compensated for salmon fisheries and those compensated for eel fisheries.

*Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The information is too detailed to be given in the form of a verbal Answer. If the hon. Member will communicate further with me I will meet his wishes so far as possible.

Kilworth Camp.

Mr. CULLINAN, (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Government has purchased the estate of Lady Holroyd Smyth, around Kilworth Camp, in the counties of Cork and Tipperary, with the object of establishing cannon and rifle ranges; and, if so, whether this will necessitate the removal of families as well as the closing of public roads within the ranges.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, Sir. Lady Holroyd Smyth's property, Moore Park, has been purchased for the purpose of erecting barracks thereon, and as an extension to Kilworth training ground.

Morning Sittings of Parliament.

Mr. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that many Members of this House would prefer reverting to the former plan of holding the Morning Sitting on Wednesday instead of on Friday; and whether he will give the House an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the subject.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I think there probably is still, as there was when the Standing Order was first proposed, some difference of opinion upon the relative convenience of having private Members' or morning sittings on Wednesday or on Friday; but I still believe that the balance of opinion, and the balance of convenience, lies in the direction of retaining the Rule in its present shape.

Coal as Contraband of War.

Mr. LAWSON WALTON (Leeds, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the declaration by Russia that she proposes to treat coal as contraband of war, his attention has been called to the declaration made by the Russian plenipotentiary at the West African Conference held in Berlin in December 1884, in relation to the neutralisation of the Congo, in which he stated that the Russian Government would never accept the interpretation that coal should be classed among the articles considered by international law as contraband of war, and that his Government would categorically refuse its consent to any article in any instrument whatever which would imply a recognition of coal (*huille ou charbon*) as contraband of war, either in relation to the Congo or any other district whatever, and, if so, have His Majesty's Ministers called the attention of the Russian Government to this declaration or made any communication to them on the subject, or do they propose to do so.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Government are aware of the declaration made by the Russian delegate to which the hon. and learned Gentleman has called our attention. The matter is one of great importance, and we are taking steps to obtain more precise information with regard to the interpretation of the Russian declaration respecting contraband of war.

National Expenditure.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, can he now state whether any decision has been arrived at for giving the House an opportunity to discuss the advisability of giving effect to the recommendations of the Committee on National Expenditure by nominating an Estimates Committee for examination of and report on one class of the Estimates, and by appointing one day in the session for the consideration of the Public Accounts Committee Report and recommendations; and can he state the result of any consultation as to the form of the Motion on which such a discussion will take place, or give the terms of the Motion proposed.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am sorry to say I have not yet been able to consult with the Leader of the Opposition on the question of having a special Committee for inspection of the Estimates. If the House desires to discuss the Report of the Public Accounts Committee the best plan would be that, instead of three additional days for Supply, there should be two only, leaving the third for the proposed discussion. I am not in a position to say whether this would be agreeable to the House at large.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Of course the right hon. Gentleman is aware we could not discuss the Report of the Public Accounts Committee in Supply?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is so, and that is why I have suggested that we should take a day for it and only have twenty-two instead of twenty-three days allotted to Supply.

Preferential Tariffs—Prime Minister's Pamphlets.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will now publish the document containing propositions embracing preferential tariffs and the taxation on food, which was brought by him before the Cabinet held on the last day of the session of 1903, as an alternative to the document on Insular Free Trade which he has already caused to be published.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member is under a perfect misapprehension on this matter. I have stated more than once—I think I have stated it outside the House, and I certainly have stated it inside the House—that there was no alternative document presented to the Cabinet; and, there being no document of the kind described, I do not know that I need deal further with the Question.

Cabinet Resignations.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the statements made by some of his late Cabinet colleagues as to the causes and circumstances of their resignation in September last, he proposes now to give the House a full account of the proceedings in relation to such resignations and the consequent reconstruction of the Cabinet.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know that the House or the country can be very usefully occupied with the continuation of a discussion which has been going on steadily now since September last, but if an opportunity is given to me next Wednesday I shall have no reluctance to take advantage of it.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: Does the right hon. Gentleman really mean to try to intrude his explanation into the discussion, next Wednesday, of a Motion which contains no reference whatever to the resignations and utterances of Ministers?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I unfortunately was not here during the debate on the Address; but I confess I should have thought that an explanation such as I thought the hon. Gentleman desired was as germane to the Motion next Wednesday as the speeches made and the explanations given on these resignations were to the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose. If the hon. Gentleman prefers to discuss the Motion next Wednesday in its narrowest and strictest form it is quite a matter of indifference to me.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: I shall at the proper time ask leave to move the Adjournment of the House.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been directed to the statement of the late Secretary of State for India in explaining, by permission, the reason of his retirement from the Cabinet, that on the last day of the session the Cabinet was summoned to consider the fiscal question in connection with certain propositions put before its members by the Prime Minister, and that there were two documents under consideration, the one on insular free trade and the other a document which contained substantive propositions embracing preferential tariffs and the taxation of food; whether, having regard to the fact that the document on insular free trade has been published, the companion document advocating preferential tariffs and the taxation of food will now be published; and what explanation, if any, is there for the publication of the one document and the withholding from publication of the other.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I hoped I had already given all the information desired by the hon. Gentleman when I answered a previous Question.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: No. I wish the Prime Minister to take special note of the statement referred to in my Question, that one of the documents was on insular free trade and that the other advocated preferential tariffs and the taxation of food. My Question is—What explanation, if any, is there for the publication of one document and the withholding from publication of the other.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman has been misled by what I conceive to be a misinterpretation of anything that has ever fallen from the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex. He seems to think that there were two documents similar in character except that they were opposite in opinion. That is not the case. There was no difference of opinion, and there was nothing similar in regard to their general form. One was, as he is well aware, a pamphlet written with a view to possible publication. The other was one of the ordinary confidential documents which one colleague constantly writes for the benefit of other colleagues, and was a part of the ordinary Cabinet procedure.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Were both documents sent to the members of the Cabinet that they might take their choice? Would the right hon. Gentleman quote them?

Mr. BLACK: Did they embody contrary opinions?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: They certainly did not, and I have said so several times.

Army Corps.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if a decision has been taken to abolish the Army Corps system; and, if not, why the words, Commanding Army Corps, have been dropped from Vote 1, Appendix 1, of the Army Estimates.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: My right hon. friend the Secretary for War informs me that the omission of the terminology in question had nothing whatever to do with any question of policy at all and was determined on long before the War Office Reorganisation Report was made.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Will the right hon. Gentleman state the course of business for this week?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Army Estimates will probably occupy the whole of the Government time this week.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: When will the Irish Bill be introduced?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope my right hon. friend will be able to introduce the Bill on Wednesday.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Under the ten minutes rule?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: When is it proposed to bring in the Scotch Education Bill?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Unless progress in Supply is more rapid than I anticipate, I am afraid there is little chance of the Scottish Education Bill being introduced this week.

THE CABINET RESIGNATIONS—MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. John Ellis, Member for Nottinghamshire, (Rushcliffe Division), rose in his place and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "The omission of the Prime Minister to give the House a full account of the proceedings in relation to the causes and circumstances of the resignations of a number of the members of his Cabinet during last autumn, especially having regard to the statements made by them as to such causes and circumstances."

Mr. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): On a point of order, may I ask whether the Motion is not precluded by a Motion on the Paper for Wednesday to call attention to the public utterances of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and other members of the Government on the fiscal question.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: On the point of order, may I ask whether, if permission were granted to the hon. Gentleman by the House to make a Motion, it would be in order to make the statement he desires on that Motion, for it seems to me, at first sight, that it would be out of order?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Nottingham had shown me this Motion, and I had considerable difficulty on two points. One was the question whether this might be construed as constituting a precedent for asking to move the Adjournment of the House whenever a Minister has not made a personal explanation which forty Members consider that he should have made; and I would point out that if I admit this Motion it should not be taken as a precedent for any such ruling. As regards the other point to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred, I also considered that, and I believe there is a great deal to be said for that view as a strictly technical view. I am of opinion, however, that, as applied to the Motion for Adjournment, it would be too technical to treat that as limiting his speech. While I say this, I am not putting it as a precedent for a Motion for the Adjournment of the House when a Minister fails to make a personal explanation which some Members of the House might think it desirable that he should make. It is under the very exceptional and important circumstances that I think it right to leave it to the House to say whether they desire or not to have the Motion for the Adjournment of the House.

And, the pleasure of the House having been signified, the Motion stood over, under Standing Order No. 10, until this Evening's Sitting.

THE ORDER OF QUESTIONS.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL on a point of order complained that there had been a grave infraction of the rights of private Members on account of the way Questions were placed on the Notice Paper.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The Notice Paper is quite in order, and if the hon. Member wishes to raise a discussion as to the way Questions are put down he cannot raise it as a question of order. The Paper is perfectly in order.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL said there was no Rule of the House which provided for the Questions of the First Lord of the Treasury being placed last with the chance of being crushed out.

*Mr. SPEAKER: It has long been the practice to place them in this position. I am not saying that the convenience of this arrangement is not an arguable point, but simply that it cannot be raised as a question of order, and it does not give the hon. Member the right to intervene in the business of the House now. The hon. Member may put down a Motion, but he cannot raise it as a question of order.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL said he did not think a Motion would be in order. Now that Questions had a time limit the First Lord's Questions were crushed out.

*Mr. SPEAKER: There is a rule that no discussion can take place in this House without there is some question before the House, unless it is a question of order immediately arising. Therefore the hon. Member is not entitled to discuss a matter of this kind.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope I may be allowed to say that I particularly dislike any Questions put to me being driven over, because answering them in writing I find much less convenient. I should like to make arrangements for my Questions to come at a period when they would not be driven over.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND asked if Mr. Speaker could say exactly what the practice was. Were they put on the Paper in the order in which they were handed in?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: They are first grouped under the heads of the different Ministers' Departments, and subject to that I believe they are put in the order in which they are handed in.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL said this grouping had only taken place since the institution of the new Rules.

COMMONS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to consider every Report made by the Board of Agriculture certifying the expediency of any Provisional Order for the enclosure or regulation of a Common, and presented to the House during the last or present sessions, before a Bill be brought in for the confirmation of such Order.

Ordered, That it be an instruction to the Committee that they have power in respect of each such Provisional Order to inquire and report to the House whether the same should be confirmed by Parliament; and, if so, whether with or without modification, and in the event of their being of opinion that the same should not be confirmed, except subject to modifications, to report such modifications accordingly with a view to such Provisional Order being remitted to the Board of Agriculture.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Twelve Members; Seven to be nominated by the House, and Five by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That five be the quorum.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

William Parrott, esquire, for the County of York (Southern part of the West Riding, Normanton Division).

NEW BILLS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894," presented by Mr. Cathcart Wason; supported by Sir William Arrol, Mr. Weir, Sir Andrew Agnew, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. Alexander Cross, Mr. Harmsworth, Colonel Denny, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. James Reid, Mr. John Dewar, and Sir J. Batty Tuke; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 16th March, and to be printed. [Bill 112.]

SALE OF WHISKY BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the Sale of Whisky, and to provide for the marking of casks and other vessels containing Whisky," presented by Sir, Herbert Maxwell; supported by Colonel Kenyon, Slaney, Captain Balfour, and Mr. Gordon; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 16th March, and to be printed. [Bill 113.]

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).

Order for Committee read.

***The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR** (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): In introducing these Estimates to the House I ask leave to make an apology. I am afraid for what I have to say I must claim indulgence, because I have really very little to recite that can be of interest to hon. Members of the House. I feel like the needy knife-grinder, "Story, God bless you, I have none to tell, Sir." The Estimates which I have to present are quite intelligible, and on the face of them they involve no new departure. They have no peculiar feature which distinguishes them unfavourably from any previous Estimates, and I feel that I can best perform my duty to the House by explaining such parts of the Estimates as are obscure, and then leave the matter to the judgment of the House. These Estimates are the last certainly that I shall ever present of this character. Hon.

Members may say that these are self-denying pledges on my part, but I venture to say they are likely to be the last Estimates of the kind that anyone occupying my place is likely to present to the House. My belief is, that we are standing at the parting of the ways with regard to the administration of the Army, and I have seen nothing, during the short time I have been brought face to face, officially, with the problems of the Army, to alter my belief that changes of considerable magnitude are necessary if this country desires to obtain the Army which it requires, and the Army which is appropriate to its needs. If I thought that these Estimates which I present to-day represented the last word upon War Office policy, I certainly should not be standing at this box now, but it is because I have the confident hope that it may fall to my lot—and if I have to abandon that hope that it may fall to the lot of some hon. Member equally solicitous for the welfare of the Army—to produce Estimates upon a totally different system, that I now ask the consideration of the House to these Estimates as interim Estimates only.

It has been complained that the Memorandum which has been circulated to Members is too brief and lacking in particulars with regard to the future. The Memorandum was simply explanatory of the Estimates. I did not follow the laudable example of my noble colleague the First Lord of the Admiralty. I did not attempt to make any summary of the conditions of the past, or to make any brilliant anticipation of the hopes of the future. I thought I would be excused from dealing with either. There was nothing in the past to which I particularly wished to call the attention of hon. Members, and there was nothing in the future which I felt at liberty to anticipate with sufficient certainty to make it reasonable and proper for me to put it before the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition mildly reproached me for hurrying these documents on the House. I owe him and the House an explanation of what I did. I think the explanation is a sound one. I ascertained through the ordinary channels that it was the desire of the House that it should have an opportunity of discussing the Navy Estimates side by side with the Army Estimates—that was, that hon. Members should have before them the contemplated expenditure on the Army, when they were discussing the important Navy Estimates which were dealt with last week; and as I have always been a firm believer in that doctrine—I have often preached it in this House—I thought I ought to be the first to give effect to it when opportunity offered, and I went out of my way to anticipate the Estimates by the presentation of the Memorandum, in order to put the main features of the Estimates before the House of Commons at the earliest possible date. That is the only explanation I can give of the fact that the Memorandum was rather hurriedly brought before hon. Members. Had I followed the ordinary course it could not have been presented until the Estimates were presented.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I did not complain of the hurrying of that document, but of the delaying of others.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am sorry if I have misinterpreted the right hon. Gentleman. I was not blaming him, but rather excusing myself. My view is that we should be able to discuss the Navy and Army Estimates together. These Estimates represent, so far as I have been able to control them at all, a redemption of the pledge I ventured to give that I would attempt to produce Army Estimates which would show some reduction on the Army Estimates which preceded them, but which would not give just opportunity for those who are anxious for the welfare of the Army, to reproach me with having made a new departure without carefully providing some machinery to take the place of that which I proposed to abandon. Nothing could be more unwise—and I am sure hon. Members on both sides of the House will be in agreement with me—than to disturb our present machine before we have another machine to put in its place. I think it would have been an act of madness to interfere with the due operation of that machine until we were prepared to substitute for it something better and more effective. That is, after all, the whole secret of the Estimates I now present to the House. I know, or I think I know, what is in the minds of most hon. Members when they come to the discussion of these two great Estimates, the Navy Estimates and the Army Estimates. There is a feeling, which I do not affect to deny the importance of—a feeling, indeed which I share—that this is a burning subject and a very serious one in the mind of the country. I have not abandoned the view I have long entertained and often expressed, that the capacities of this country to spend money on its armaments are not infinite, and that if we are to have a readjustment, it must be a readjustment in the sense of first making perfect our naval defence, even though to some extent we are compelled to provide on a greater scale of magnitude than other Powers. Therefore the advocates of economy will find me to be a very sympathetic listener. Of course, I have my own ideas as to the way in which economies may be best affected. I think the first rule we have got to lay down is this, that true economy exists in making a machine that will do our work, and that anything short of that is a waste of money, and that anything in excess of that is extravagance. But, of course, it is an obvious remark that that valuation is of no use at all unless we know what the duties are. Now I do not think that up to the present time, or until a very short time ago, this country did quite know what the duties were which the Army was expected to perform, and I believe that at this moment we have not that full information as to what those duties are which we hope some day to possess. But I think we are taking steps to bring professional judgment, combined with a knowledge of political exigencies, and combined with a knowledge of financial resources, to bear on the solution of this problem, and I feel that it is the duty of every Secretary of State for War, to whatever Party he belongs, to put into the forefront of all his calculations this matter of the duties which the Army has to perform. It is from my conception of those duties that I regard the whole question. In these matters, in the first place it is for the professionals, and secondly for the House of Commons, to give to the War Office the necessary instructions which will allow it to proceed.

I come now to these Estimates, which I confess do not represent my idea of what ought to be the character or the scale of expenditure on our Army, but they do represent, after taking all aspects of the case into consideration, what is necessary to carry on the Army on its present basis for another year. The hon. Member has reproached me for not having imported into these Estimates the decisions arrived at in connection with the Report of the War Office Reconstitution Committee. I hope that point will not be pressed, for I think you will see that it is not a very reasonable or effective point. I should like hon. Members to bear in mind the dates of these accounts. I do not want to go back on the question when it is necessary to consider the Estimates, but anyone familiar with Government business knows what that means. I take the commencement of the current year, and I would remind hon. Members that the first sitting of this Committee was held on 29th December, that the first Report was received on 1st February, that the second Report was received on 29th February, and that the third Report has not yet been received. I think it will be admitted that it is not within the bounds of human ingenuity to provide in these accounts for the contents of those Reports. The dates of the accounts are regulated like the laws of the Medes and the Persians, and it is not within our power to take into consideration the changes likely to be involved by these Reports.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): Your Estimates are signed by the new Council.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Of course they are signed by the new Council. What is it that this House requires? We have been trying to place the War Office on the basis of the Admiralty. We have endeavoured to get the responsibility for those Estimates shared by the Council which the Government has created. It seemed to me then, and it seems to me still, to be a rational and inevitable step that the moment the Council is formed it should take the responsibility which has been thrust upon it. The hon. Member will say, "Ah, but why does a member of the Council sign them when he cannot know all about them?" Does he mean to apply that reasoning to every new member of the Admiralty Board? Are we to be told at this stage that the responsibility of a Council like that is to be absolutely interpreted to be the personal assurance of every member of it that he is cognisant with all the facts the Estimates contain? If so, you have to make another Council, you have to begin again, you have to destroy the Board of Admiralty, you have to destroy the Army Board. Let me come, after all, to the matter on which I ought to be addressing the House. The Estimates show, as hon. Members have already learned, a diminution of £8,300,000 compared with the gross expenditure last year. Hon. Members know perfectly well that the bulk of this reduction, is due to the cessation of war charges. The amount which I think is fairly chargeable in that way is £5,325,000. That sum accounts for not only the cessation of war charges, but for practically the cessation of the great expenditure on stores under the Mowatt programme, which was exceptional expenditure, and for the winding up of the accounts in regard to China. The Mowatt programme was a programme sanctioned by Parliament and involving a large addition to the normal Estimates of the Army for providing stores to make up a deficiency. Nearly the whole of these stores have now been provided and the necessity for continuing the expenditure has therefore ceased. There are other reductions which I will deal with later on, and which are set out in the memorandum I have placed before hon. Members, amounting to £1,480,000. After making all these reductions, what I call legitimate reductions, we have £280,000 less than what I think is the normal War Office Estimate. I think it is a matter which we may regard with some satisfaction that we have now reduced these Estimates by that sum below the normal War Office expenditure. For the moment I am taking the normal Estimates of last year as being £280,000 in excess of the Estimates of this year, which amount to £28,900,000, and considering whether this result is good or bad. I can only say, in view of the economy which some hon. Members are anxious to effect, that a reduction of £280,000 is not a large reduction. But I think hon. Members must go a little further than that, and must look into the figures which make up the totals in the debit and credit balances. When hon. Members find what they are getting for this sum of £28,900,000 I think there will be some reason for satisfaction.

It is much harder to justify reductions than it is to justify increases. One has to be very careful, if one is responsible for the administration of the Army, before reducing any expenditure, for this reason—that every year the responsibilities of the Army are increasing. When you increase your business, it is the normal experience of men of business that you must increase your capital; and it seems to me that no Secretary of State should present to this House, without good reason and a very clear explanation, any decrease in the normal Army expenditure. Therefore I feel more called upon to explain my decreases than I do to explain my increases. I know I shall be criticised in this House, on both sides, by hon. Members who desire to see great decreases in our Estimates, and by other hon. Members who, knowing, as I do, the condition of the Army, believe, as I do not, that that condition can be greatly improved by the mere expenditure of money. I submit to this House—to this I attach some importance—that the decreases which I have sanctioned this year have in no way impaired the efficiency of the Army. It will be noted that there is a reduction of £50,000 in the Estimate for the Foot Guards. No one can regret more than I do that there should be any reduction in the *personnel* of the Guards. There are no better troops in the Army; they have maintained their discipline under most trying circumstances, and have been a model and example to the Army. I should be the last person to come down to this House and advocate a reduction in the establishment of the Guards if it were a question of my will. It is not a question of my will; this reduction is not a voluntary reduction. Recruiting for the Guards has fallen off, and we are face to face with a reduction of no less than 1,894 men since 1st February, 1903, in the Brigade of Guards. Therefore this reduction of £50,000 merely corresponds with the facts which I am compelled to contemplate. I will not trouble the House at this moment with what I believe to be the reasons for this falling off. I believe the principal reason is that we have now sanctioned three years' recruiting for the whole of the Army, and what was before the privilege and distinction of the Brigade of Guards, has now become common to the whole of the Line. Coupled with that change there is the fact that the duties of the Guards are very heavy. This has contributed to driving recruits from the Brigade of Guards into the Line battalions. Whatever has been the cause, the result is to be regretted, but, however regrettable it is, it has compelled us to effect an economy of £50,000. There is a similar economy, having a similar explanation, in the infantry of the Line. I have been compelled to sanction a reduction of fifty men on the establishment of the battalions at home. There is a shortage in the infantry battalions of 4,776 men—that is the equivalent of seven or eight battalions. I do not consider a falling off of that kind is a matter upon which we ought to congratulate ourselves—it simply marks a failure in our system. There are many who think that a reduction of the battalions might be possible or desirable who will not view with satisfaction a reduction which is not voluntary, but is the result of inadequate recruiting. I think I am quite safe in making the reduction which I have made of £175,000 in respect of this reduction of infantry of the Line. It would require a great development of recruiting to enable us to catch up the whole of this deficiency during the coming year. There is an item of £100,000 for the discontinuance of the Militia Reserve, which was recently established, and was intended to take in men who were leaving the Royal Garrison regiments, and also Regular soldiers who had never gone into the Militia, but had left the Army for several years and had under twenty-one years service. I do not think that experiment has proved to be altogether satisfactory. Undoubtedly it has had the effect of inducing men who otherwise might have gone into the Militia not to go into the Militia. I am not quite clear that this additional force is a very great contribution to our military strength. At any rate, this I can say, with the full acquiescence of my military

advisers I have decided that the entrance to the Militia Reserve, except for the men of the Garrison regiments, shall be discontinued. Hon. Members will understand that every soldier well knows without my telling him that this Militia Reserve is a totally different body from the old Militia Reserve which was composed of men who were practically part of the Line battalions serving *pro tem.* in the Militia battalions.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): Will Militiamen not be allowed to join?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: This Reserve was for men who had not served in the Militia. The Stores Vote shows the large reduction of £750,000. This reduction is due to the fact that we have a great accumulation of stores, especially clothing, in this country, due to the South African War. I do not know that that is an item which we ought to regard with satisfaction, because it is a reduction which cannot be repeated in future years —as the stores become exhausted they will have to be replaced, and this plethora does not represent a normal condition. There is an item of £148,000 for deferred pay. Hon. Members know that the number of men who are entitled to claim deferred pay is being diminished. The total of these reductions is nearly £1,500,000.

I should like the House to understand that *pari passu* with these reductions there have been some very important increases. I think it is rather a matter for congratulation that these very important increases, which I think do represent real gain to the Army, should have been possible without seriously increasing the normal Estimates. Under my right hon. friend who preceded me a most valuable and important addition was made to the pay of the Army—an addition which, I believe, has not yet borne its full fruit, but which is most advantageous to the Army and is fully justified. That addition will cost us £750,000 in the coming year. This cost comes, not unexpectedly, but practically for the first time on the Estimates, because the period when the full advantage of the new pay comes into force is 1st April of the year. There is also, I am glad to say, the large sum of £210,000 which will become payable on account of the strengthening of the Army Reserve. The Army Reserve, owing to various causes, is much below what we should like it to be—it stands at 69,500 men—and in view of the great importance of the Army Reserve to this country it is obviously desirable that something like the normal figures should be attained as soon as possible. It may be asked—certainly it was asked by me—How do you account for the war, apart from the casualties, leading to this great reduction of the Reserve? Certainly it would seem obvious that two years of war service in a man's military career need not eliminate him from the Reserve. What has happened is this. During the war a great number of men on the establishment in India extended their period of service to twelve years on the inducement of the bounty. Every man so extending his service *pro tanto* diminished the Army Reserve. Fortunately, we are now, I think, rapidly increasing the total of the Army Reserve again, and that increase will be represented during the coming year by the sum of £210,000. Then there is the sum of £98,000 for the Military Works Acts annuities. There is also £70,000 for the full training of the Militia. After the war it was not thought necessary to bring out the whole of the Militia battalions for training, but a return to the ordinary practice during the coming year is contemplated. All these items, I think, are satisfactory, and it is satisfactory to be able to make these additions without increasing the normal total of the Army Estimates. Let me remind hon. Members that these Estimates include a sum of no less than £1,360,000, which is the figure necessitated by the maintenance of the garrison in South Africa. I do not mean to apologise for that. It is obvious that any country which extends its responsibilities must extend its expenditure, and, therefore, I think we must have anticipated that there would be that additional cost.

All hon. Members who take a close interest in the Army will have detected the fact that up to this point I have made no reference whatever to a matter in which they are greatly interested, and that is the re-armament of the artillery. I gave, not a pledge, but an indication in this House that if I were permitted I should make a proposal to the House with regard to the rearmament of the artillery. I am able to make that proposal now; but by a fortunate concurrence of circumstances I do not ask the House to sanction the cost of additions to the artillery on these Estimates. We have now practically decided on a type of new gun. I can assure hon. Gentlemen that that gun, the details of which I shall be able to give on a subsequent occasion, is a gun of which the country will be proud—they are a heavy field gun and a horse artillery gun which, I believe, will stand practically without a rival and certainly without a superior in Europe. We are now in a position to commence the manufacture of these guns, and the work will be begun next month. A number of these guns can be made during the coming financial year, and we shall give the manufacturers practically *carte blanche* to proceed as fast as they can. But the output during the first year must be limited because a great deal of time will be taken up with making the patterns and gauges which are necessary for securing uniformity in all parts of the gun made in different places. We propose to complete during the next year 108 field guns and eighteen Royal Horse Artillery guns, and to make considerable progress with the manufacture of a large number of additional guns. The Government of India had available and desired to expend a certain portion of its revenue upon an object which had long been contemplated — the re-armament and strengthening of the military equipment of the Army in India—and my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for India has intimated to me that they are desirous of obtaining these guns as soon as possible. They will be paid for by the Government of India. I cannot conceive a more fortunate circumstance, because if it had been left absolutely to my own discretion to assign the place where these guns should go to, I would have assigned them to India. India is our only possible place of contact with a great European army. India is a place where long ranges are common, while in this country they are exceedingly uncommon. There are very few places in this country with a 2,000 yards' range.

There will be greater value for these guns in India than there would be here, and therefore we propose to assign to India practically the whole of the output of these guns for the coming year. The Government of India will initiate the manufacture, and the guns will be placed where I think all of us would wish to see them placed.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): Do the Government of India usually pay for guns?

***MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER**: Always.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): Can the right hon. Gentleman give us the calibre of the guns?

***MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER**: I cannot give the exact calibre in inches, but I can give the weight of the projectile. It will be 18½lbs. and 12½lbs.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said that what he desired to know was whether there would be a great number of calibres, or only one or two.

***MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER**: They will be of the same calibre, with, as I have said, a 12½lb. and an 18½lb. projectile. We are also manufacturing a new rifle. This rifle has been in course of manufacture for some time, and we are going to adopt the same process with regard to a considerable number of these rifles as we are adopting with the field and Horse Artillery guns. The Indian Government are going to take 71,000 stand of these rifles during the coming year, and the upshot of these two transactions is that a sum of £700,000, in addition to the amount calculated in these Estimates, will be expended during the coming year to improve the armament of the British Army in the place where that armament is most urgently required.

Hon. Members will perhaps wish me to say something about recruiting. The recruiting is not altogether unsatisfactory, yet it leaves much to be desired. The recruiting returns are vitiated as a document by the fact that recruiting has been closed for some time past for two important branches of the Army—namely, the Artillery and the Cavalry. Those branches are still overborne, as the expression goes, on account of the number of men who passed into the ranks during the war and have not yet taken their discharge into the Reserve, and, no doubt partly in consequence, the infantry has acquired a larger proportion of recruits. I cannot say that I am altogether satisfied with the quality of the recruits, or that I am confident that such recruiting is going to give us all we want. I do not wish to dogmatise on the matter one way or the other, because I believe the full effect of the reforms initiated by my right hon. friend has not yet been fully felt, perhaps, and that when it is realised how great has been the improvement in the position of the soldier we may rely not only on getting more recruits, but possibly recruits of a different class from those we have already obtained. I do not know whether the country yet realises how great has been the improvement in the position of the soldier; and I do trust that those, and they are many, who, like myself, believe that the Army offers a splendid career for a young man, will take the pains to ascertain what is the improvement in the soldier's position, or what will be the improvement in his position when the full change in regard to pay takes effect. I have before me a document which has been prepared in the War Office, which I believe accurately represents the emoluments, the total money received in one form or another by the soldier in 1904 as compared with his receipts in 1897. I find that the figure of £22 15s. 5d. represents the earlier year, as against no less than £35 19s. 7d. for a fully-trained soldier in the present year. And when the other reforms in respect of accommodation in barracks and so on are considered, I hope it will be realised that any one may confidently advise a young man in whom he is interested, and who has any inclination for a military career, to join the Army under the improved circumstances that now exist.

I wish I could tell a satisfactory tale about the Militia. I am sorry to say that circumstances do not permit me to do so. The condition of the Militia, both as regards officers and men, is profoundly unsatisfactory. There has been a very heavy decline both in the number of effectives and in the recruiting. I will not give the figures as to recruiting at length, because I might mislead hon. Members by including figures for the war; but when I say that the nominal effectives are 92,000, and that the strength of the Infantry is only 75,000 men, hon. Members will see that the Militia has long ceased to be able to perform fully the important duties which I believe it might be made capable of performing for the country. I have over and over again given my reasons for believing that this fall in the Militia is due to causes which are preventable, which are obvious. I believe the Militia has long been regarded too much as an adjunct of the Line. It has had no independent existence. I believe the rule which is common to any body or corporation applies to the Militia, and that, if you desire to restore it to a satisfactory condition you must make it feel that it is an all-important element in the defence of the country, that every battalion has individual existence, and that the prestige of the officer and the man in a Militia battalion is that which he earns for himself and for his battalion while he is in it. I believe it does not pass the wit of man to give to the Militia those conditions of service which I think are calculated to make it the force we all agree it can be made.

I do not like to speak at length of the Volunteers, a force which is of enormous importance to the country—or perhaps I ought to say, is capable of being made of enormous importance to the country—and whose affairs are at the present moment being discussed by a Committee appointed for this purpose. When its labours, which have already occupied a great length of time, are completed, I shall feel much more free to speak with regard to the Volunteers. My own views are very definite, and I do not think they will be found to differ very widely from those held by those who have the true interests of the Volunteers at heart. At the present moment I am confident the Volunteers are not fulfilling to anything like the extent they ought to fulfil the duties which the country hopes they may fulfil in time of war. I do not believe that that is to any large extent the fault of the Volunteers. I believe it is because we have not yet thought out our problems. We have not yet learned to apply the special conditions of each service to that service. We have not realised what part we want each branch of the Army to take in time of war; and until we do all these things the Volunteers will continue to be what they are now—a body capable of producing a magnificent force, but which would be misdescribed at the present time if we said it was a force of a truly military character, with a quality corresponding to its numbers, and with an organisation corresponding to the zeal and energy of those who compose it.

I must refer for one moment to another force, of which I can speak with the greatest possible satisfaction. That is the Yeomanry. I have been asked with regard to the Yeomanry whether it is not a paper force, because it has not yet obtained its full establishment. That question involves an entire misconception. There are two conditions in which a battalion or regiment can be—either it may never have reached its establishment, though always on the upward grade, or it may have fallen from its establishment. The Yeomanry is in the condition of never having reached its establishment though always approximating to it, and within a very few weeks, probably within a few days, the Yeomanry will reach its establishment. The progress of the Yeomanry under its reorganised conditions since 1901 has been uniform and satisfactory, and I believe the force is now capable of doing a very large amount of very valuable service in any trouble in which this country may be involved.

I come back now to the question of broad finance, because if I do not hon. Members opposite certainly will. I have deliberately omitted from this calculation any Estimate for Somaliland. I plead guilty to the fact, and I think the only justification for it is the avowal that I have not left this matter in any uncertainty. I have not pretended that, if this war continues, as it may continue, we have an adequate amount of money for the coming year to provide for its needs. And if the war does continue, and as long as it continues, we shall have to ask the House for more money.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Have you any money for next year?

***Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER**: No, we have not. There is no mystery about it—the fact appears on the face of the Estimates. We have taken money which will carry us on to the end of the present year. I do not want to enter into a discussion about Somaliland. I repeat what I said the other night, that in my opinion, an opinion formed on the advice of my counsellors, the situation in Somaliland is more favourable than it has been for many months past. But if our anticipations are once more disappointed, we shall no doubt be face to face with the necessity of forming a plan of campaign next year. What the form of that campaign may be I do not know. I think it will all depend on what may happen in the next few weeks. But I can assure hon. Members that if an opportunity be given, consistent with the safety of those who depend upon us, of winding up this campaign, I, at any rate, as responsible for the War Office—and in this matter I speak on behalf of the Government—shall avail myself of the opportunity. If it does not arise, then we shall have to ask the House for additional supplies.

I have been asked during the course of this afternoon whether we have taken any steps to give effect to the Report of the War Office Reorganisation Committee. Sir, we have. We have taken steps which I believe have commended themselves to the House and to the country; and I can assure hon. Members that, so far as I am concerned, no day, no hour will be lost which, consistently with my duty and obligations, I can devote to ensuring that the recommendation of these Reports shall be applied to the service of the Army. [An Hon. Member: All the recommendations?] I said so far as my obligations permit. I have such absolute confidence in the value of these recommendations that I have very little doubt that they will be applied practically *en bloc* for the service of the Army. I do not go back for one moment on what has been said on behalf of the Government. I think it reasonable and obvious that the Government and the War Office should retain, at any rate, the right to read, examine, and, if necessary, to criticise, what is contained in the Report. [Laughter.] The right hon. Gentleman opposite laughs, but I am between two fires. The batteries are situated entirely on that side of the House. An hon. Gentleman on the other side has asked me why we were not putting into the Estimates the effect which might result from the adoption of this Report. The right hon. Gentleman now smiles because I say we require a little time and claim the right to examine the propositions contained in the Report. I have quoted to the House what I call the salient dates in this matter. I think I have shown that there has been no loss of time in this House. I believe that the selection of the members of the Committee could not have been better, and that the work done by the Committee has been a model of close, scientific, and informed examination of a great subject. I believe that the Committee has done more by its example to show how some of our great national problems should be attacked than has any similar body for many years past. I also believe that, practically speaking, the general recommendations of that Committee are such as find favour with the country and with the Army. I believe that in the main we shall do well to adopt those recommendations; but I am not going now either to enter upon a criticism or a defence of the work of that Committee. I believe an opportunity will be given—I know it will be given if it be asked for, and I trust that opportunity will be taken—to discuss this Report thoroughly from beginning to end. I believe the whole essence and point of this Report are that from start to finish it is a coherent work based upon ideas penetrating every part of it, having a beginning, a middle, and a conclusion, directed to one purpose and inspired by one aim. There are one or two matters to which I must refer, because they are not future, but past, matters. I am going to ask the House to accept what we have done. We have acted in part upon this Report. The first part of this Report did advise us to make an Army Council; we have created that Army Council. The Report did advise us to create an Inspector-General of the Army; we have appointed that Inspector-General. My view is that in creating that Council, we did exactly what the House desired and exactly what the country desired. We created the machinery which would alone enable us to give effective consideration to the various points we knew were to be raised in the remainder of the Committee's Report, and to give effect to the results of their deliberations. That is all I have to say at this stage either in explanation or excuse of what we have done. My belief is, that this Army Council will fulfil the expectations of hon. Members. I believe it will give greater efficiency to the Army as a weapon for the purposes of this country. I trust it will.

I confess that I do not view with equanimity the condition of the Army at the present time. I believe that, important as it is that we should have this Army Council and that we should have these changes in the constitution of the War Office, it is still more important that we should carefully examine the condition of our Army to see whether it is really capable of performing those tasks which, whatever our politics, whatever our views may be, we fear may be imposed upon it on some occasion which may be, but we all hope is not, near. We have at this moment a great asset in the number of trained soldiers in this country, but that asset will not last for ever. It is being diminished every day. I have been compelled to examine the constitution, organisation, and composition of our Army. I am not satisfied that we can continue with advantage under our present organisation, or that we can do it without grave risk to the fortunes of this country. I am afraid my speech has been dull. I have avoided saying anything about my aspirations or entering into any detailed criticism of things as they are. I think nothing could be more unwise than to find fault with that which is existing, until and unless you are prepared to furnish a remedy. I think it is still more unwise and, moreover, most undignified to throw out suggestions with regard to possible remedies, unless one is fully equipped with the authority to place those remedies before Parliament, as a definite solution of the problem. I hope that occasion may arise, but I have excluded any remarks of that kind from my statement now. I shall endeavour to explain, as well as I can, the details of these Estimates. If I am not as alert in doing it as hon. Members would desire, if I am not as fully acquainted with all the matters of detail comprised in the Estimates as I ought to be, I hope hon. Members will bear in mind that I have not yet been made as familiar with all those items of account, as I was with the items connected with another Department. I have endeavoured to acquaint myself with all the salient points on which I know hon. Members who take an interest in the Army are likely to require information. In the meanwhile, I hope hon. Members will not suppose I have in this statement said all I should like to say upon the Army, or have made all those demands upon their sympathy and goodwill which I may have to make in the future.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is not my intention at this time to enter upon a general examination of the Estimates at large, but I do wish to call the attention of the House, and of the Government especially, to the position in which the House stands in this matter. The right hon. Gentleman made a speech, I think probably the most extraordinary that has ever been made by a War Minister in this House, because the Government somehow—no one knows how—have created for themselves at this moment a position of such confusion with regard to the administration of the Army that it is almost impossible for a Minister to set clearly before the House the policy of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman began by saying "Story! God bless you, I have none to tell, Sir;" but that is the complaint we make of this administration of needy knife-grinders. It is the story that we want. We cannot effectively and advantageously discuss these Estimates until we have the story. We want to know the history of this strange Committee that has been appointed to revolutionise, not only the War Office, but the Army itself. We want to know especially what are the relations of that Committee and of their recommendations to the Government and the policy of the Government, and we have been able to get nothing hitherto out of the Prime Minister or the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman to-day told my hon. friend the Member for Northampton that the Government had decided upon a certain course and that was all he could tell. He would not say anything as to the action of the Cabinet. But we ought to know whose action has been used in this matter, and who has justified by his action the phrases that are used in the Report and elsewhere with regard to the policy and opinions of the Government. The Government in this matter, as in others, appears to be a Government of no settled convictions. The Committee they themselves have appointed imputed certain definite opinions and policies to them, and they themselves partly repudiate and partly accept those attributions or imputations. I do not know whether there is any instance in our administrative history of a Committee such as this. I do not propose just now to discuss the individual recommendations of the Committee on their merits. Some of them may be good or some of them may be bad. It would not be advantageous, as I think, nor would it be decent, for the House of Commons to discuss the two sections of the Report which have been published before we know what the opinion of the Government is upon that Report and before the Government have advised the House one way or the other in the matter.

Now, Sir, what is this Committee? We know what a Royal Commission is, and we know what a Departmental Committee is. But this Committee was appointed, so far as we know, not by the King, not by the Cabinet. It seems to have been a personal affair of the Prime Minister's, and it has reported to the Prime Minister. As far as we can make out, and I think this is probably the case, the Cabinet have had no deliberations upon it. An hon. friend of mine behind me suggests that there was another body of a somewhat similar kind though a larger body. I suppose this triumvirate, this small Committee of three, did not sit at Birmingham. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh."] There has been most extraordinary alacrity and hurry. First of all, of whom is this Committee composed? It is like a revolutionary committee of public safety—appointed and prepared to overturn anything and to guillotine anybody; and I do not think it would be going too far to say of the right hon. Gentlemen the Secretary of State for India and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that if they have not been decapitated they have run a very narrow risk of it. But upon this Committee, which is to settle the whole organisation of the War Office and of the Army, there is not a single person—there are only three of them—who has had any experience in the administration of the Army, and only one who has had any knowledge or experience of military affairs at all; and yet, setting aside all experience and all past precedent and all knowledge, they set themselves to make up a new heaven and a new earth. I have the privilege of being personally acquainted, and I have been for some years, with all the three members of the Committee, so I do not speak of them with any personal disrespect whatever; but really the whole circumstances are absolutely unprecedented, and yet the behests of the Committee are to be carried out without discussion in the House of Commons; indeed, a great part of them, as the right hon. Gentleman has said, have been carried out already. Their tone, I think everyone will agree with me, is somewhat peremptory and dictatorial and arrogant towards so important a body in the Constitution of the country as the Cabinet and towards the Prime Minister. Their code must be swallowed wholesale. It is everything or nothing. It is a most extraordinary circumstance, which must amuse any hon. Member who has taken the pains to read the Report, that almost every paragraph is said to deal with a vital question of the most urgent character which must be immediately dealt with. Talk about retaliation! That is nothing like this pistol presented at the head of the unfortunate Prime Minister. These three gentlemen, who presumably, until the day before yesterday, knew nothing about it, are dictating in this tone to the Government and the country as to the form, in the minutest detail, which the defensive forces of the country shall take.

I give the go-by to all the recommendations of the Committee on their own merits. There are some of them of which, as every one who knows my opinions knows pretty well, I should be in favour, but of others I cannot say the same thing. I am not discussing the details of the plan in itself; but I say that the manner of constitution, the whole procedure, is without any precedent, and I believe it to be an infringement in some respects of constitutional practice, and certainly of the decent conduct of public affairs, if the House of Commons and Parliament are to keep their rights firmly established. This Committee has a singular advantage in having its own organ in the Press, to which they communicate their desires and behests with a most unconstitutional and most improper association of the name of the King. When I brought the matter before the House at Question time the other day, the Prime Minister said that the name of the King ought not to be introduced; but the name of the King has been introduced, either by the Committee or by some member representing the Government, or by some one acting on the authority of the Government, and we are entitled to know who it was that introduced it. Anything more improper cannot be imagined. It, of course, conveyed to the world at large the idea that His Majesty was personally recommending this scheme to the country. That would be a most unconstitutional arrangement if the matter had not been submitted to the responsible advisers of the Crown. But, of course, no such unconstitutional tendency was shown on the part of the King. It is the assumption that this body—or some one acting in collusion with them—have committed this outrage on constitutional practice.

But why this extraordinary hot haste? From beginning to end we are told this and that must be done immediately. Men now serving the country in this Department or in certain offices must be ousted without delay. They even speak in one case of the matter being effected in a fortnight. What is the great hurry? I should think it was a most inconvenient thing, and one very much to be avoided, to have the matter brought up just as the Government were putting their Estimates before Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman says that these Estimates are quite independent of the Report, and no doubt he thinks they do not commit the Government or the House to anything except some minor part of the scheme. If that is so, then there is no reason for this haste. Why was it that everything was hustled through in this way? The members of the Committee, who, as I have said, had no previous experience, make strong assertions, some of which will, I think, require a good deal of proof, and they say that they have consulted a great many military authorities of experience and knowledge. But they have taken no evidence, at all events we are not told whom they consulted, and in this random and slipshod way opinions are to be put forward as the basis of a new arrangement which perhaps could not be sustained if they were put forward by witnesses and subjected to cross-examination. What is the extraordinary haste that you should do away with every safeguard for prudent administration, and that you should depart from the established practice of not coming to a conclusion in so essential and important a matter as this, without having considered the matter on all sides, and gained all the information you could, and then formed your decision thereupon? I cannot imagine what the intention can have been. It may have been to distract the public mind from other matters. We have seen other cases of the some process. Whatever the motive may have been it does not matter. I maintain that the House has the right to demand to be informed as to the circumstances of the appointment of this Committee, as to the relations of the Government to the Committee, as to the manner in which the Government have considered the recommendations of the Committee, and as to the advice which the Government will give to the House and the country in the matter before we are asked to enter on the Estimates for the year; and I think it is not treating the House of Commons with proper respect for the Government to have avoided taking that very obvious course. I have brought the question forward at once because it is not a matter that would brook delay. I do not desire to proceed now to enter into other matters connected with the Estimates, of which there are many, as I think, deserving of the closest consideration of the House and in Committee, because I shall have plenty of other opportunities of expressing my opinion upon them.

*MR. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside) said that in submitting the Motion standing in his name he desired to call attention to a question arising out of the Report of the late War Commission. He asked the House first of all to notice a note by Sir John Jackson, appearing on page 150 of the Report, to the following effect—

> "While signing this Report, in which I fully concur as a whole, I desire . . . . to express the opinion that if a few months prior to the outbreak of hostilities the War Office had had (as suggested by Sir Andrew Noble, Q. 20840) a sum of, say, £10,000,000 at its disposal, to be spent only with the consent of the Cabinet, but without the publicity of Parliament, preparations could have been made which would have reduced the cost of the war—even if it had not prevented the Boers from declaring war—by probably not less than £100,000,000 sterling."

The evidence of Sir A. Noble there cited was as follows—

> "I may say upon that subject—(that is about preparation) – that I do not see how it is possible, unless our policy is changed, that we can ever be sufficiently prepared in the case of a war suddenly breaking out. I need not point out that in the great campaign to which I just now alluded, Frederick had his army chest full, and at his own disposal. We know further that at this moment Germany have a very large sum of money, over which the Parliament has no control, and which can be spent immediately without going to Parliament. It seems to me that the only way in which efficient preparation for war can be made, seeing the questions to which every Minister is now subjected, is that the War Office and Admiralty should have at their disposal a very considerable sum of money, not to be spent, of course, except with the authority of the Cabinet, but at the same time so that it would not be necessary to proclaim the fact to all the world. As things are now, all the world knows the next day what preparations we are making if the present system of questions as to raising money is allowed to go on.
>
> 20833. (*Sir George Taubman-Goldie.*)] Could they buy guns and other warlike material without its being known?—Yes, my firm has done that more than once for other nations."

Sir Andrew Noble went on to say—

> "We were making, I may mention, for the War Office, shrapnel-shell for field guns at the time the war broke out. I think we were manufacturing at the rate of about 200 or 300 a week. About five weeks after the war broke out I was sent for to the War Office, and asked what I could supply. I said that I thought in time we should get up to 7,000 a week. But we might have been doing 7,000 a week at that moment if they had told us of their requirements six or seven weeks before."

He submitted that that statement was of great importance, because the most serious thing disclosed with regard to the want of preparation for the late war was the shortage of military stores. And later on Sir George Taubman-Goldie asked—

> "When you suggest the Government having a considerable sum in hand for the purchase of material, have you given any consideration to the amount that you would consider necessary?"

and Sir Andrew Noble replied—

> "Well, I have. I do not pretend in any way to be an authority upon these subjects, but I thought that if there was a sum of £10,000,000 at the disposal of the Admiralty, and the same sum at the disposal of the War Office, not to be spent at all, except when privately informed by the Cabinet that they might go on, efficient preparations could be made."

Lord Strathcona asked—

> "You would always keep a reserve of £10,000,000?—Yes, that must be done.
>
> "20844. And you consider, although that is a large sum, that it would be insignificant compared to the enormous cost involved in entering upon a great war when unprepared for it?—Yes.
>
> "20845. And when money is invariably expended lavishly?—Yes. We need only go back to the Crimean War and others; there was two or three times as much wasted on the Crimean War as would have been necessary if we had been in a state of efficient preparation."

So much for the evidence of Sir Andrew Noble. Now he came to the Report of the Commissioners, and they said—

> "And though, no doubt, the measure suggested by Sir Andrew Noble would go far to remove the chief difficulty which prevents the giving of orders in a situation of the kind, it is probably unnecessary to discuss a step which is so unlikely to receive the sanction of Parliament."

He submitted that this conclusion of the Commissioners was somewhat disquieting and impotent at the same time, for it meant that the experience of unpreparedness disclosed to the Royal Commission might be repeated at any time, and let them reform the War Office as they would, they would be as badly off as ever unless the *fons et origo mali* was attacked. The Government must be enabled to make preparations without prejudice to their diplomatic efforts. If Sir Andrew Noble was right, and the

Commissioners did not seem to disagree, they might be in the same plight again. If the Commissioners were right then it was hopeless to suggest a remedy at variance with traditional ways.

During the last three years there had been three occasions of great crisis. In the first place there was a trouble with regard to Siam in 1894, and he was glad to mention this because he was far from wishing to make a Party point of the contention he was now urging. The Government composed of right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen opposite was then in power. If the Government of 1894 had come down to the House and asked for a large vote of credit what would the consequences have been? His opinion was that as a Party they would have treated the question in a broad and patriotic spirit, but from what he knew of political human nature he was afraid that there would not have been wanting hon. Members who would have been unable to resist the temptation of asking a few inconvenient questions, and the effect would have been the same whether the questioners were few or many. The Government would have been asked why this money was wanted, why it was so much, and since when had it become necessary, and was it to be inferred that all hope of a peaceful settlement was at an end, and if so were the negotiations being conducted sincerely? The impression would have been given to the public and to a far greater extent abroad that the negotiations then going on were not sincere and that the country as a whole was not prepared to back the Government in that course. If that was true in 1894, how much more true would it have been at the time of the Fashoda crisis? They could easily recall the circumstances of that crisis and the amount of excitement there was at that time in the public mind, and to have called Parliament together in 1898 would have brought that crisis undoubtedly to a head. Public feeling was at that time sufficiently excited, and he did not believe, if Parliament had been called together, there would have been any reasonable likelihood of peace being maintained. If peace had not been maintained in 1894 and 1898, on those two occasions, could they say, from the experience they had since had, that this country would have been in a position to carry on the war in which they would have been plunged? On the third occasion, in 1899, the state of things was much the same. During long negotiations the country hoped for a peaceful issue, and the Government did their best to secure it but failed, and they knew now that this country was not then adequately prepared for the struggle we had to undergo. It was a matter of inestimable benefit and it was a national asset simply invaluable, if they had the whole feeling of the country at their back, but they could not have that unless the people were persuaded that their quarrel was clearly and demonstrably right, and unless they were convinced that they had done all they could consistent with honour and safety to bring about a peaceful settlement. That, of course, must involve time, and during that time, while the preparation of the mind of the nation was going on, the material preparations must necessarily wait, and when the crisis came the material preparation was to be made, and it would have to be made hurriedly and at once, and would be costly beyond measure as compared with what would have been involved if the material preparations had been taken in hand in due time.

From our peculiar position and constitution this country was specially open to such a difficulty, but it was a difficulty which necessarily affected all other countries. In Germany the difficulty was met in two ways. There was in the first place an institution called the Sechandhung Bank. It was not very easy to get exact or accurate information with regard to this institution, but as far as he had been able to ascertain it was nominally a private bank, but actually a great majority of the shares were in the hands of the Government. Then there was an actual reserve in specie of 120,000,000 marks, or about £6,000,000, actually deposited in the Julius Thuom at Spandau only to be used by the Government in case of a war-like emergency, but which was entirely beyond the control of the Reichstag. The actual Estimates voted by the Reichstag were as strictly under Parliamentary control as in England. In France this provision was made by the *Nomenclature Des Services*, which included a kind of schedule of articles which might be ordered in time of necessity apart from the authorisation of Parliament. In Austria there was a different provision, and in all these foreign countries there was a provision made for this purpose which this country entirely lacked. Of course this was largely a matter for financial experts, and he did not attempt to dogmatise as to how it might be done. Perhaps it might be enough to trust to the friendly assistance of great banking houses, whose services were always at the disposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day, or something might be done by the Treasury Chest Fund. That was a departure from the strict system of Parliamentary control exercised over the Estimates. It might be done by an extension of this fund, but this fund at the present time would not meet the difficulty, firstly because it was not large enough, and in the second place, because repayment had to be made during the course of the same financial year, and if the country was in stress at the end of the financial year this fund would not be available. Again, there was another possibility. As the House knew there was a system whereby unexpended balances of the Estimates at the end of the year had to be repaid to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Personally he could not help thinking this was a very bad system, which had been contrived in the interests of a rigid economy, but which in practice led to very great extravagance. It had been condemned by the Dawkins Commission and he had heard Ministers condemn that system and complain of its operation, although they had to submit to it. Under that system a considerable sum was surrendered every year. He found that for the last ten years the unexpended balances amounted to no less than £1,100,000, and instead of that money going back into the Exchequer he would suggest that it should be devoted to a special fund to be used during a warlike emergency. If that were done those responsible for the spending departments would have an interest to save money which at present they had not got. As to constitutional objections to any step of this kind, it would be said that it was opposed to every tradition of Parliament, and that it was contrary to the theory of the Constitution. But it was not more contrary to public feeling and Parliamentary traditions than the establishment of a standing Army itself. For many years there was a feeling against a standing Army quite as strong as that against the step he now advocated. On the broad question he would remark that the Constitution existed for the country and not the country for the Constitution, and if this change was on general and business grounds, and, in view of modern exigencies, wise and necessary, the fact that it would not have approved itself to legislators of the seventeenth century need not be taken into account. He thought there were some people who did not realise that good Queen Anne was dead, and that Charles I. had been even longer in his grave. To give a power like that proposed, to Charles I. would have been dangerous in the extreme. Could it be said that the giving of such a power to King Edward VII. was to risk the danger of our civil and religious liberties being trampled underfoot? Ministers would have to render a strict account, if not next year, within a comparatively short period of time. What would be done would be that the Executive of the day would have power to spend this amount at their discretion. If necessary it might be done by an annual Bill, in which case it would merely give this contingent credit to the Executive of the day for one year only.

If there was one lesson that the War Commission more strongly than another insisted upon it was that we should adapt the machinery of civil life to the exigences of possible war. He submitted that to take such a step would only be to carry into the government of the country the common principle of businesslike action. Any large firm having great dealings at a distance would allow its agents some credit for common sense and would not insist upon supervising every step taken. They would not insist that their agents should not take a step involving the expenditure of money without asking the previous consent of the board, and still less without taking the shareholders into their previous confidence. We already gave great powers to our agents in the making of treaties. That was not in derogation of the ultimate power of Parliament, which had to sanction those treaties. If the Executive could be trusted in that department he submitted that they might be trusted in the preparation for warlike issues as well. We were at this moment using our best efforts to adapt the actual machinery of war so as to be of the best use in future. Should they not also do the same thing with the first motive power which set that machinery in motion. The same risks would almost inevitably arise in future as in the past. The Government would in future be in the same dilemma of throwing chances of peace aside, or being too late in the event of war. We could not too soon or too earnestly make some provision to meet the case. He knew from the forms of the House that his Motion was one which it would not be easy for the Government to accede to. By his Motion, as drafted, this power was given to the Government of the day. If it were possible to devise any other scheme whereby the same power should be given, and the same precautions taken to avoid the same difficulty and emergency, he would gladly see it given to some other body if it could be found. The United States had a Committee on Foreign Relations where foreign questions were secretly discussed. He presumed that any institution of that kind was impossible here. He did not know anybody in the State except the Executive Government that could be entrusted with discretion of this kind. But in any case he would certainly limit the power he proposed to the initiative of the Sovereign, on the advice of his Ministers, and on the written recommendations of the new Committee of Defence. He presumed that his right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer for one reason or other could not accede to this Motion, but he would ask him at any rate to agree to the appointment of a Select Committee to deal with the difficulty to which he had called attention. He would not attempt to insist on any particular reference on which the proceedings of that Committee should take place. He had drafted a reference, but he should be only too glad if a better could be suggested as long as the dilemma and difficulty were really grappled with. He suggested the following possible reference—

> "To consider whether the restrictions on Supply and Expenditure involved in the present financial system of the country constitute a source of danger or prodigality in times of actual or threatened war; and to report whether any changes in the said system are required by the public interest, saving always the ultimate control of Parliament over the raising and appropriation of Supply."

COLONEL **KENYON-SLANEY** (Shropshire, Newport) called attention to the deserted condition of the Opposition Benches. They were now debating a matter which was supposed to be of great interest to the country, but when he began to speak there was not a single representative of the Opposition in the House. Since he began two hon. Members had entered, so that there was a possibility of dual control on that side. His hon. friend who introduced the Amendment had covered the ground so well that it would not be necessary for him to add very much to what had been said. There was no phrase more constantly bandied about from lip to lip than "lessons of the war." What was the most absolutely clear and convincing lesson the war had taught? It was that first of all absolute preparedness for war meant successful war, that successful war meant short war, and that short war meant economical war. That was the lesson which above all others this country ought to lay to heart and learn in reference to its arrangements for future contingencies. There was plenty of one sort of preparedness for war. There was never an occasion when naval or military questions came before the House when they had not abundance of discussion. Under the present system every item of the Estimates was debated, every question regarding our armaments was debated, our weakest spots were indicated, our strongest points were also disclosed for the information not only of our friends but also of our possible foes. Some hon. Members debated these things in the interest of efficiency, some in the interest of economy, some in the interest of peace at any price, and some from the point of view of trying to score a point over political opponents. He did not want to say a word that would be offensive if he could avoid it, but it was a matter of common knowledge to this House and the country that on the last two occasions on which this country had been involved in war, and the preparations for war were discussed in this House, they had among them a certain body of Members who by their public declarations in the country and their public action in this House had signified their sympathy with the enemies of the country rather than ourselves, and from the point of view of public policy he asked if any country could be satisfied with preparations conducted under such circumstances as these. Those to whom he referred had as much right to take part in the discussion as the most patriotic. He was aware that the House of Commons would not part with its power in that direction, but what was desired was that they should be reinforced in some way which would make the preparations effective.

The first requirement of the preparations was that the country involved in war should be able to strike with full power, instantly and without hesitation. In order to aid and abet our public preparation we wanted a system of silent unadvertised preparation, which was essential both for efficiency and economy. There need be nothing underhand or anything to be ashamed of in making this preparation silently without advertising it to all the nations of the world. Let them suppose that a certain country was gradually developing hostile feelings against us and that in the course of eighteen months those feelings might be used against us, it would be unwise as a matter of public policy that any overt preparation should be made or that anything like a threat should be held out, though it would be extremely important that preparation should be made without public advertisement. At that very time we might be in possession of some invention—a new torpedo, gun, shell or rifle, and it might be that a certain provision had been made for these in the Estimates. But if we suddenly developed these preparations the Government might be exposed to a variety of Questions, as to why these were necessary and against whom they were intended. But supposing the suggestion of his hon. friend were acceded to, what would happen? The Defence Committee would be able to go to the great manufacturing firms, such as the Armstrongs, or Vickers and Maxim, and say to them—"Now, if you care to put on such and such a plant, or put on such and such a force of workmen that will enable you to turn out these guns, or whatever it might be, in such and such a time, we will give you a guarantee that you will not be losers." Imagine what the difference would be found when we were revealed to be strong where our opponents thought we were weak! That surely was a strong argument in favour of efficiency and effective warfare; and if this country was to fight at all what was wanted was that the success should be immediate. It was also an argument for economic warfare, for the shorter the war the expense would be infinitely lessened. We could never hope to carry on our great Empire for an indefinite period without war. In spite of all the Hague Conventions there would be wars from time to time. With the best intentions in the world wars could not always be averted. He remembered not many years ago going over a great manufactory of warlike stores and saw on all sides guns in different processes of manufacture and war material being made at express rate. He turned to the manager of these great works and said to him, how did he account in a time of apparently profound peace for the activity in fulfilling all these large orders and the necessity for employing these thousands of men? And his answer was the most bitter commentary imaginable on the Hague Convention. He said, "It is entirely the outcome of the Czar's rescript." That was the reason why we should be on our guard and armed against surprises. The object of the Motion of his hon. friend was to secure efficient, effective, and economic warfare. It was to follow out the advice of some of the best experts in the country—Sir Andrew Noble and Sir John Jackson, and to translate into action what was the real opinion of that famous Commission which they gave in that famous Report on the War. But at what cost did his hon. friend and himself wish to secure that object? They asked the House only temporarily to surrender some little portion of its prerogative and privilege. This House was not very backward in demanding that some prerogatives of other institutions should be curtailed, and why should it not be able to set an example in its own way to do something to meet this demand by making such a small surrender as was asked for in this Motion? They had heard a great deal not long ago from the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition—not for the first time—in his most excellent Tory speech, that he the right hon. Gentleman preferred old methods to new; but these old methods could always be adapted to new circumstances, and it was for that reason that he seconded the Motion of his hon. friend.

Amendment proposed—

> "To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to insert the words, 'in the opinion of this House, it is expedient to enable His Majesty in times of Imperial emergency to raise money to an amount not exceeding £5,000,000 for military purposes without the previous consent of Parliament."—(*Mr. J. F. Hope.*)

Question proposed "That the words proposed to be left out, stand part of the Question."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): My hon. friend has for a long time taken an interest in our financial system, and anyone who heard his speech must have seen that he has devoted much time and attention in his desire to find a remedy for the deficiencies which he now believes to exist in that system. My hon. friend is so well known for the part he has taken in our debates on the Army and his constant efforts to improve the condition of the Army, that I am sure the House must be possessed with a great deal of sympathy not only in the object which he has in view but for my hon. friend himself in bringing forward the Motion now under discussion. But I venture to think that my hon. friend can hardly realise how great a revolution in our financial system would be involved in his proposals, and how little probability there is that the great powers he suggests should be willingly conferred on the Government by a majority chosen from either side of the House. I think there is some misapprehension in the hon. Gentleman's mind as to the amount of latitude which the Government does enjoy even under present conditions, and that he is under some misapprehension also as to the actual advantages which would attach to his proposals if they were adopted in the form he suggests. The object to which the hon. Member for Brightside specially directed attention is the desirability of the Government being able, in a time of great emergency, to make secret preparations in the event of diplomacy failing to provide a satisfactory solution of the question at issue, without having that diplomacy hampered or its success menaced by the knowledge obtained by this House, this country, or by foreign Powers of the preparations actually in progress. I quite admit—everyone admits—that the Government in whose hands you place large secret funds to be used at their discretion, not only without previous leave of Parliament but without any Parliamentary question in the course of the negotiations, is in a position of very much greater freedom and greater power than a Parliamentary Government subject to the limitations to which we are now subject. But does my hon. friend think that the money could be raised by the means he suggests without its becoming known, or that all these vast preparations could be carried out without eliciting any remark in the country where everything is open to the public, where we have a most active, enterprising Press which tells us daily not only everything in its power, but a great deal which is an anticipation, more or less intelligent, of what might happen. I hope my hon. friend will just consider more carefully the suggestion he has made. His Resolution is that—

> "It is expedient to enable His Majesty in times of Imperial emergency to raise money"

Of course, the Government must be the judge of whether an Imperial emergency has arisen or not; and therefore the only security the House and the country would have for the due expenditure of money would be the honour of our public men and their sense of responsibility. In the second place, the Estimates of the cost of the number of men employed would have to become known, and an Act of Indemnity would be required. But when this Imperial emergency arises, my hon.

friend suggests that the Government should have power

> "To raise money to an amount not exceeding £5,000,000 for military purposes without the previous consent of Parliament."

He suggests that what should be done is that the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day should, by inquiry of the great City houses, whose advice and assistance have always been given to those who hold my position—

*Mr. J. F. HOPE: That is only one alternative.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: My hon. friend made two or three suggestions that were entirely distinct, and I cannot deal with all of them in the same breath. We are told that we should approach these great City houses and ask them to lend us £5,000,000. My first observation on that is—does my hon. friend really think that it is possible for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to borrow £5,000,000 from the great City houses without the matter becoming the common knowledge of the City? It would be impossible to keep a secret like that. But on what security are these great City houses going to lend? When the Chancellor of the Exchequer has to raise money from the public his security is the Act of Parliament which authorises him to do so; but it would be quite different to raise money from the City houses where he had no security. It could not be done secretly, and I am not sure that it could be done at all. Then my hon. friend says he has another alternative, which is that in some unexplained way the amount of money in the Treasury Chest is to be so largely increased as practically to give the Government a great war fund. At present the Treasury Chest is merely a banking balance, practically a cash balance in the hands of Treasury officials throughout the world, to enable the current financial transactions of the Empire to be carried on. My hon. friend must have thought that the Treasury Chest was something different from what it is. He suggests that we should create a great gold reserve, for use in emergencies, similar to the great reserves possessed by Russia and several other Powers. That might be a great convenience when a great war broke out, as it would relieve the immediate pressure, but we could not use such a fund as that secretly.

That brings me to the other point mentioned by my hon. and gallant friend, who suggested that it could be used for the purchase of stores and in giving orders to contractors to go ahead at full speed when only sufficient money was provided to pay them for perhaps a small proportion of the ultimate output. But the moment we give those orders for stores my hon. friend's other object of secret preparation during diplomatic negotiations would be lost. The placing of those orders, and the sudden pressure at all the great contractors' works, as well as in the Government arsenals, would at once become known; would at once be open to exactly the same adverse comment; and would throw in the way of our diplomatic negotiations exactly the same difficulties which I admit we suffer from now. But if the real object of obtaining this war reserve is that we should have a proper supply of stores when war breaks out, I think there is a better way of obtaining it. It is the way which the Government have already adopted, and which, as explained by my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War, is almost complete. It is the way of fixing the proper and definite reserve of every kind of stores and filling those reserves, I might say almost automatically, as fast as anything is drawn out of them. That is the only kind of preparation for war which can be steadily maintained in peace, and which will give us the great reserve we want without any sudden action during diplomatic negotiations, and I hope that once we have got those stores they will never be allowed again to fall below the level which is considered necessary. What the witnesses before the Committee spoke about was, as I understand it—I have no title to interpret their thoughts—was more of military preparations, such as the movements of troops. They thought that if troops could be moved quickly, and without observation, it would be desirable, but with such an active newspaper Press as now exists it was impossible that that kind of preparation could be made without becoming public.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY: Sir Andrew Noble referred to the preparation of stores and not to the movement of troops.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, Sir, but you cannot place orders for £5,000,000 worth of stores, or any quantity of that kind, without it at once becoming known in the districts where the orders are being executed, and from these districts the news spreads to the world at large that great military preparations are in progress. What can be done in the way of placing orders in an emergency can be done, I venture to say, under our present financial system. Events might take a good turn, or a bad turn, and it is impossible for any Government to know with certainty whether the negotiations will have a peaceful or a warlike termination. It must be for the Government of the day, with a full sense of its responsibility, to decide whether it ought to make special and abnormal preparations for war, and, if so, to what extent. The Government have the means to do that, within such reasonable limits as can possibly be compatible with the preservation of secrecy, under our present financial system. As an illustration, I would put a case which happened the other day. Two Chilian warships were in the market. His Majesty's Government thought it necessary to buy them. That we did on our own responsibility. We made the contract, and in buying them we put on the country an obligation to pay £1,800,000, and we actually paid some £750,000 of that amount before Parliament was consulted in the matter. That is the sense of responsibility which every Minister has to bear in difficult negotiations, and under those circumstances every Government can have under its control a certain amount of money sufficient to make urgent preparation, though, of course, it must come to Parliament and ask for sanction for the appropriation of the money. Such expenditure cannot be long concealed from Parliament, even if any Government wished to do so; neither can the use to which the money has been applied. I give that as an illustration to show that even under our present system we still have the power, if we feel that the necessity justifies it, to exercise our responsibility and apply money under our control to purposes for which Parliament has not specifically voted it.

My hon. friend the Member for the Brightside Division endeavoured to work into this question another matter in which he has taken a great interest for many years. He attacked the system under which Departments surrender unspent balances at the end of the year, and he said that that deprived the Departments of any incentive to economy. For some reason my hon. friend always cites the Army and Navy Departments as illustrations of his theory, and does not appear to think that the Civil Service Department successfully illustrates it.

MR. J. F. HOPE: Sir Clinton Dawkin's Committee specially called attention to the matter in connection with the Army. No doubt a Committee on the Post Office would arrive at a similar conclusion.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not mean to say that the money is always spent to the best advantage, and that sometimes a Department may not be tempted to buy stores when they might have done without them a little time longer; but I believe that this system has not led to any such general waste of money as my hon. friend supposes. My own experience, both in the spending Departments and formerly as Secretary to the Treasury, is that the power which the Treasury has and uses to transfer money from one Army Vote to another, or from one Navy Vote to another, or to allow a surplus on one head to be applied to a want on another does directly make for true economy and is useful in that respect; but if the money instead of being used in that way is to go into another fund not under the control of the War Office or of the Admiralty, but which is to be a special war chest only to be touched by the Cabinet, I fail to see how that will be any greater incentive to economy than the present system. The amount will pass out of the control of the spending Departments, and they will no longer have the power to spend it. If there is a surplus on the year these surrendered balances go to swell it; and are ultimately applied to the Old Sinking Fund for the reduction of the National Debt. If at any time I would have been inclined to divert a surplus to other purposes, I do not think that the present is an opportune moment. After all, my hon. friend and the House must remember that our resources for war are of three kinds; namely, our military resources, our naval resources, and our financial resources. The Sinking Fund is one of our financial reserves against the contingency of war, and I should be very sorry to see it interfered with. Certainly the present time would be a singularly inopportune moment to choose for altering our financial system in this respect. On that ground alone I am unable to assent to my hon. friend's proposal. I hold, in the first place, that the objects which my hon. friend particularly wishes to attain, in so far as they are attainable at all, can be obtained under our present financial system. After all, in these matters of special preparation, when an emergency arises, we must rely on two things—a sense of responsibility in the Government of the day, and the patriotism and good sense of this House at large. The Government of the day must make up its mind and discuss in this House what line it will take in an emergency, and this House will support it.

Mr. BLAKE (Longford, S.) said he thought there could be no doubt whatever that secrecy for a length of time in raising, and still more in spending, large sums of money was absolutely impossible; but even if it were not, under our existing system as understood, and under the feeling which prevailed in this House, the power of raising money for an emergency or of using money for an emergency which had already been voted for another purpose did not exist in too small but in too large a form, and if they were to examine the transfer of Votes from one sub-head to another, they would find greater ground for restriction than for any enlargement of the Government's powers in this direction. As for any danger to this country from the supposed deprivation of the Government of such powers, that was absolutely unfounded. There was the case of the purchase of the warships recently. The Government thought, rightly or wrongly, that the condition of affairs in the East rendered it desirable to purchase two warships, and used money for the purpose that was not voted for it. The vitally important thing in these matters was that the Government should be kept ever in mind that they were acting solely on their own responsibility, and any Bill that would place a fund in the hands of the Government, or which would enable the Government to raise such a fund, would amount almost to a direct invitation to the Government to act—an invitation on which they might act to the detriment of the country. Our Constitution was not, more than any other human institution, perfect. It had its advantages and its disadvantages; but in the days when people struggled for real liberty, it was the question of Parliamentary control for which the English people struggled. Let them not now, in the heyday of freedom, abandon the primary security for that freedom itself. Who was to judge as to the Imperial emergency? Were they not told of an emergency to-day in this community—an Imperial emergency far more close to our doors, and far more likely to affect the welfare of the country, than the question which the hon. Gentleman had brought up, and yet there were very different opinions as to whether an Imperial emergency existed or not. He should not have risen but he desired to say a word for the ancient English liberties on which the modern English liberties depended, and his principal reason for supporting the views of his right hon. friend against this Motion was not merely that there was no practical inconvenience in times of supposed great emergency when Parliament was not sitting, as when the Suez Canal shares were bought, and as when these two Chilian warships were bought, but the fact that we had to balance the advantages and disadvantages of such a scheme, and as he felt the disadvantages greatly exceeded the advantages he declined by his voice or his vote to shake the foundations of English liberties.

*Sir **J. FERGUSSON** (Manchester, N.E.) said he was a little surprised when the hon. Member for Sheffield brought this matter before the House that it should have attracted so little attention from hon. Members. It was not a matter to be lightly dismissed. He did not understand that the Motion could be regarded as interfering with that financial control of the House of Commons, which everybody was anxious to maintain, it merely acknowledged that there might be occasions when Ministers of the day might take important steps without the previous consent of this House. It was easy for the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take exception to the proposal on financial grounds, and to point out the difficulties in the way of carrying a proposal of this kind into effect, and he did not think that the House would affirm a general Resolution of this kind. The alternative that his hon. friend indicated towards the close of his speech was a most necessary preliminary, namely, that the particulars of the remedy proposed should be considered by a Committee. There was one subject in regard to this Motion that had not been touched upon, and that was the timely provision of field transport. One of the chief causes of our soldiers being unable to take advantage of their early successes in the South African War was the absence of field transport. The troops were tied to the railway and were unable to make the simplest flank movements owing to the want of transport. Every other Power purchased largely animals for field transport if there was any idea that war was about to take place, and if, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said, the Government had ample powers to make such provision at the time of the South African War, then the responsibility of the Government in 1899 was greater than the House had yet been acquainted with, because one of the chief reasons given for our being so unprepared to meet the Boer invasion was that we could not make adequate provision without pointing so directly to war as to endanger peaceful negotiations.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that was exactly what he had stated. It was not the want of money but the impossibility of making preparations secretly. The mere fact that they had £5,000,000 in the Tower of London would not enable the Government to make preparations without the fact becoming known.

***Sir J. FERGUSSON** asked whether his right hon. friend contended that the Government could have made adequate purchases of animals in various parts of the world without powers which they did not at present possess.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said his contention was that they could not make adequate purchases of field transport all over the world without the world knowing what they were doing. The object of secrecy, upon which so much stress had been laid, would not have been attained by the mere fact that they had a great reserve of money.

***Sir J. FERGUSSON** was of opinion that measures might be taken for the purchase of transport in many parts of the world without attracting such notice as would endanger peaceful negotiations. In fact, it had been done over and over again by military Powers who had the greatest interest in preserving peace. He had known times when those who were best informed were of opinion that war was imminent, and Governments were known to be preparing so that if occasion arose they might have the necessary material for moving troops. But the knowledge that those preparations were being made, so far from endangering peaceful negotiations, actually prevented war, by bringing home to other nations the danger of precipitating hostilities. He did not believe it would be possible for any Government with their existing powers to enter into the arrangements or to become answerable for the large amount of money necessitated by preparations for war. The Russian Government had a great war chest, and all the other great military nations had special means by which they could make warlike preparations and avoid the danger of war coming upon them unprepared. The subject was deserving of more consideration than it had yet received, and circumstances could be conceived in which the House would regret that greater attention had not been given to the matter.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said the Amendment embodied the most foolish and extravagant proposal to which he had ever listened, and he doubted whether its proposer or seconder would press it to a division. It was a great pity the hon. Member for the Brightside Division had not devoted to an inquiry into the present financial position of this country a portion of the considerable time and labour he had spent in studying the condition of things obtaining in other countries; he would not then have been under the impression that the recent loss of credit had rendered Great Britain unable to raise £5,000,000 should circumstances require it. That these additional powers were not necessary was shown by the fact that £4,000,000 was expended on Suez Canal shares without this House being taken into the confidence of the Government; and there were the more recent cases of the purchase of Chilian warships, and the expenditure of £900,000 on the Cape railways. With all these precedents he could not understand how the hon. Member could really suppose that it was impossible for the Government to raise £5,000,000. The fact that these powers were not necessary made him believe there was something in the Resolution which did not appear on the surface. In that case he marvelled at the moderation of the proposal. If it was intended to take expenditure from under the control of Parliament why was the sum fixed at £5,000,000? Why not £50,000,000? Since they came into power the present Government had taken from the control of Parliament the expenditure of £16,000,000 on the naval service, and a somewhat similar amount on the Army, and this was a proposal to take away another £5,000,000. Reference had been made to unpreparedness for war, but, seeing that the present year's Estimates amounted to £42,000,000 for the Navy, and £28,000,000 for the Army, he thought that such references ought to be unjustifiable. He was afraid that if the Government remained much longer in office, they would, urged by private Members behind them, still further infringe the privileges which had been bought at so heavy a cost in the past.

Colonel SANDYS (Lancashire, Bootle) agreed with the view that the matter under discussion was well worthy of consideration, and that the mover of the Resolution might be congratulated on having taken one step further in the direction of the military efficiency which now seemed to be in the air. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had somewhat missed the point of the proposal. It was not that the Government should wait until the moment of national stress arrived before they endeavoured to raise the money, but that they should have it immedateliy under their control in the Treasury Chest, so that they could expend it in a way which would attract the least notice, and without imperilling the success of any negotiations that might be proceeding. If those who had the well-being and efficiency of the Army of this country at stake would only carry their minds back over the wars of centuries past they would find one unfailing fault repeated, and it was that this country was never ready for war, and while he had the power to speak in the House he should never lose an opportunity of impressing upon hon. Members and the public that they must not wait for the emergency to arise, but be prepared for eventualities beforehand. He rejoiced to see that efficiency was in the air at the present time, and he did not think there was any danger of that efficiency being curtailed by the action of any future Government, or by the present Government.

Question put and agreed to.

Main Question again proposed.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the Motion of which he had given notice was one which he could not move under present circumstances. He noticed that two of his hon. friends had also given notice of Motions connected with the same subject, and he had no doubt they would address the House. Probably they would be able to have a debate on both sides of the present position of the Army problem, which, the Secretary of War to-day was rather obliged to avoid and unable to face. The subject of the particular Motion on the Paper was a limited one, although it was one of importance. He, for one, should not take part in any general attack upon the Report of the Committee on War Office Reorganisation because it was a revolutionary Report, and he had always believed that War Office reforms must be revolutionary to be of any use at all. Although there might be much in it that he should take exception to, nevertheless he could not join in any general attack upon it. The Report had been acted upon to a great extent already, and they would in the course of this debate have comments made upon the portions of the Report which had been carried into execution, and which were contained in the Estimates now before the House. Some hon. Members might be inclined to attack the appointment of the Inspector-General, but as he had been made subordinate to the War Office Council the appointment was free from many objections which his hon. friends might have been inclined to make to it. The War Office Committee had made a great number of recommendations, which, up to the present, had been partly accepted and partly shelved for the moment, and with regard to which the language of the Government was most peculiar. Two years ago they had great debates upon the Army Corps system in the House upon the proposals of the then Secretary of State for War. The Secretary of State for India was present to-day during the statement made by the Secretary of State for War and he sat by his side. He wished to know if the right hon. Gentleman agreed with the Secretary of State for War in this matter. Did he agree with the Report of the Committee? Did the Prime Minister agree with the Report of the War Office Committee upon reorganisation? This Committee stated that the time had come when they assumed that the linked battalion system was to be got rid of, and a more portentous change than that could not be made. They assumed that the present Secretary of State for War had been put into office to carry out the views he had always entertained, but those views were diametrically opposite to the views stated last year and the year before by the then Secretary of State for War.

The Motion he had placed on the Paper was confined to a single point, although it raised a matter of some importance. It was the statement contained in the covering letter to the Prime Minister that the Defence Committee of the Cabinet was to be reorganised, and was to form a General Staff, as a General Staff was understood in every country in the world. That letter they were told was an informal one, but this statement was repeated in the formal part of this Report, the whole of which the Government had approved of, and it was to some extent repeated in the second part. He did not know whether he needed to detain the House at length upon this question, because he doubted whether anyone would defend a proposal that the Defence Committee should be anything in the nature of a General Staff. Surely it was not necessary to try and explain to the House the nature of a General Staff, but there were obvious reasons which made it ridiculous that any such term should be applied to the proposed new Defence Committee, and he did think that this was a matter of importance, because it was calculated to give to the staff of that Committee an altogether exaggerated notion of their own position. It was important that they should at once snuff out any such suggestion, if indeed anyone was prepared to defend it at all. They were in a great difficulty not only with regard to that particular position but altogether as to the Report of this Committee. The whole of the first part of the Report he understood had been approved by the Government, and he should like to call the attention of the Secretary of State for War to this point. The Prime Minister was asked a question about this, and he was inclined to think that the right hon. Gentleman had been misreported in *Hansard* and in the papers. At all events, the Prime Minister said, in reply to a question, that the first part of the Report had not been adopted by His Majesty's Government. Those words were diametrically contradicted by the Report of the Committee. The Committee themselves twice over went out of their way to say that the Government had approved of the whole of the first part of their Report. Did any one doubt that fact? The Committee used those very words. The second part of the Report, in the third line of the third page, also stated that His Majesty's Government had already approved of the whole of the first part. Surely the House could not discuss those Estimates without knowing whether that was the case or not. The Committee laid before the House of Commons the second part of this Report and there the direct statement was made that the Government had agreed to the whole of the first part of the Report, and that assertion was made twice over. Under these circumstances how could they discuss the Estimates, or avoid moving to report progress on Vote A if they did not know exactly how this matter stood? They must press to know what portion of the first Report had not been approved by the Government, if, indeed, they had not approved of the whole of it. He thought they would be able to prove by the Estimates how far the Government had yet gone in their actual approval of the Report.

He condoled with the Secretary of State for War to-day—holding the opinions he did and the opinions of the Army reformers below the Gangway and the opinions which he himself held on the main lines of Army reform—at having had the most ungrateful task of defending somebody else's Estimates which were the Estimates of the old system, and the Estimates of the Secretary of State for India, against which they fought two years ago and against which they must fight again this year upon the very same grounds they fought last year and the year before. The Government were not agreed amongst themselves on this question up to the present time, and yet the House was expected to accept these enormous Estimates which had been presented, which showed no real reduction upon the Estimates of two years ago, and which last year were accepted in the dark without the slightest idea of what policy was to be carried out. Several Questions had been asked at Question time upon this subject, and the hon. Member for Perthshire pointed out that a number of officers had been appointed in addition to the Army Council, and they were told that they were to be paid out of the salaries put down to other officers performing other functions which were condemned by the first part of the Report. Was that a position in which the House should be placed? Could they accept those Estimates and usefully commence their discussion in that position? They did not know for what services, or in pursuance of what policy, they were asked to vote this money. He asked the Prime Minister to-day whether the Army Estimates abolished or continued the Army Corps system, and he pointed out that there were words in the list of generals which read "Commanding Army Corps." Why had those words been dropped out altogether. They were told that they were dropped out before the inquiry was made by the Committee. These words must have been dropped out in pursuance of some policy. He believed it was a matter of public notoriety long before the Committee was appointed that it was not intended to carry the Army scheme into effect for the six Army Corps. There was a great deal of evidence given on the Army Corps system before the Royal Commission on the War, and it was a remarkable fact that Lord Roberts in his evidence before that Committee condemned it on the same points on which it was condemned in this House. Lord Roberts, in his evidence, spoke strongly against the mixed corps of Militia and Volunteers, and, when asked how far his authority could be vouched for the Army Corps system, said the scheme was brought into existence with his concurrence. But Lord Roberts's concurrence, expressed by telegram from Madeira, was a very different thing from the representation made to the House two years ago, when the gallant field-marshal was vouched as being in favour of it by the Secretary of State for India. The Secretary of State for War was asked on Friday a Question regarding the linked battalions, and he drew this distinction—he suggested that the Government approved of the view of the Royal Commission against the Army Corps system of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India, and the view of the Commission against the linked battalion system, but he said that they had not yet taken any specific act of policy pointing in the direction of a definite confirmation of that approval. That was rather a fine casuistic distinction to draw, and the House would not be doing its duty if it allowed the Government to force through these Estimates without having definitely declared to the House of Commons that it had abandoned the Army Corps system, which had been so justly attacked by the Committee as well as in this House, and also abandoned the linked battalion system.

The comments of the War Office Reorganisation Committee, which the Secretary of State so justly praised to-day, upon the Army Corps system were surely deserving of the attention of the House. It was put before the House by the Secretary of State for India when Secretary of State for War as a great measure of decentralisation, and last year they were told that an important portion of the decentralisation had already been accomplished in fact. Yet the Committee appointed by the Government said that the Army was still as centralised as it was ten years ago. That was exactly the contention of himself and his friends two years ago, and it was the contention of the Prime Minister, who argued with all his strength when he vouched to the House that three Army Corps might be required and probably would be required for the defence of the Indian frontier. That was absolutely condemned for ever in these Estimates. They were asked to pass Vote A and Vote 1 without the Government deigning to tell them that they accepted this second Report of the Committee, and that they were going to abolish the Army Corps system. The House of Commons had never before been asked to take a step of that kind and to pass Estimates in the dark in this fashion. He need hardly go through the final words of the Report in which the Committee asked whether the corps ever existed otherwise than on paper. The Secretary of State now implored the House not to disable the machine; but, according to the Committee, the machine was absolutely disabled at the present time. He assumed, as the House must assume, that the Government were going to carry the new system into effect. He did not know what view the Secretary of State for India took on the matter, but a year ago his view, in which he had the support of the Prime Minister, was diametrically opposed to that of the Committee, which he understood the Government were going to adopt. All the names of the War Office administration were changed in a day on the first Report of the Committee at a meeting of the War Office Council, hurriedly got together while two of the chief military members were not yet in this country. In a single day the ordinary forms received by soldiers and by Members of this House were altered. He himself received a letter in which the usual formula, "I am directed by the Secretary of State" was struck out, and the phrase "I am commanded by the Army Council" substituted. This was no trivial matter, seeing that the Estimates were signed and presented on the responsibility of these individuals. He did not understand what responsibility should attach to the inferior military members of the Council in the absence of their military superiors. It was a sham responsibility. These Estimates, so far as they continued the Army Corps system and did not abolish the linked battalion system, were condemned in advance by the Report of the Committee, and it was almost foolish to vouch the responsibility of the newly appointed men who probably shared the opinion of the Committee in regard to the system they condemned. There was a large amount of additional staff placed on the Estimates in connection with the new system—how large they did not know. The Members who made so gallant a fight against the Army Corps system were bound to take up the fight again on the first Vote. The whole of the Committee's Report appeared to be accepted by the Government. They had not protested, so far as he understood, against any portion of the Report. The Estimates which had been thus placed before the House had, he thought, been prepared in connection with a hopeless task. The Secretary of State had imposed on him a hopeless task because he had to defend in a sort of way Estimates which were prepared for the Army Corps system, and, therefore, he had to defend Estimates which he did not personally approve of.

In connection with the change there was supposed to be a saving which the right hon. Gentleman explained very elaborately in his speech to the House. In these days of economy many hon. Members had only been able to support the large and increasing Estimates for the Navy because they hoped there would be a reduction in the military expenditure. It was necessary to examine carefully the nature of these savings to see whether they were or were not illusory. The Secretary of State had explained to the House the curious operation which was proposed with regard to the rearmament of the Army with quick-firing guns. This was a question in which the Prime Minister had taken great interest, and he had argued that this rearmament had already taken place. The right hon. Gentleman had put it in the list of great Conservative reforms. Now it was going to be begun and done entirely at the expense of India in addition to the reduction of three batteries of Artillery in this country, and the addition of three batteries in India. He thought this re-armament ought to have been undertaken before we went to war. It ought to have been done in 1899. The fact was that there was an immense real increase in the Estimates though there was a nominal decrease, and the whole of the increase was charged to India in the present year, and three batteries of Artillery were also to be charged to that unfortunate country. The words of the Secretary for War in his memory were—

> "It will not be possible to secure delivery during 1904–5 of more than the number of complete batteries assigned to India; but manufacture will be in full swing in the latter part of the year, and rapid deliveries of batteries for the home Army will take place throughout the following year. Arrangements are being made to complete practically the whole rearmament, together with a large number of reserve batteries by the 31st March, 1907, at a total cost of about £3,150,000. This will involve a considerable increase on the Army Estimates of 1905–6 and 1906–7."

When they considered the cost of the Army in connection with the cost of the Navy, a proposal of this kind could not be forgotten. He maintained that the savings shown were illusory. The Secretary of State for War very frankly admitted to the House that the reduction in the number of men was a necessary one, because the men could not be recruited, and that very point confirmed his views and those of his friends upon the linked battalion system, and in favour of the great change which the Committee recommended, or rather which they assumed that the Government had already prepared for. He thought that he, with his friends, had some right to complain that the Government by their divisions of this subject had not been able to place Estimates on this basis before the Committee, but they had not been able to give the Committee, either in the Memorandum or speeches, a promise that they were going to deal with this question in a fashion which would enable them to pass the Estimates.

Then in connection with these supposed reductions in the Army, it must be remembered that there was a very large increase in the loans for Military works. The one point to which those of them who had long entertained the revolutionary views which the Secretary of State had so persistently placed before the House, and which he now held, and which had been given general approval in the Report of the Committee—the one point to which they looked as the eventual means of saving a large sum of money was the abolition of the linked battalion system, and the substitution for it of reliance far more, for anything like home defence, on the Auxiliary Forces, and the maintaining of the home Regular Forces only as a depôt for the supply of Regular troops abroad. That was the only way of salvation. The Government were putting off the carrying out of the one definite recommendation of the War Commission conveyed in the very strongest terms of warning, in favour of the increase in the number of horses and mounted men. The Government could not face that necessary increase unless they took the bold step of the large reduction which the abolition of the linked battalion system would give them.

The cost of the Army as it stood was always decreased to the House and the country by the refusal to count into the expenditure the expenditure on the Indian forces and on the land forces under the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office, and the expenditure in the colonies themselves, some shown and some not shown in the Appropriations in aid. It was necessary to bear in mind the gigantic total cost of the land forces of the British Empire, because otherwise they could not make a fair comparison with the cost of the Fleet in which they were indulging so frequently last week. The cost of the land forces at the present time was officially placed before the House at £32,500,000, including the Works Vote for the previous year to that for which the Estimates were given—*i.e.*, the Works Vote for 1903–4. To this had to be added about £500,000 for allowances from other Departments, shown in the Estimates, but not included in the official figures, making £33,000,000 at home dispensed by the Army. To this must be added for the Empire, the Indian military expenditure officially known as £17,750,000, and the expenditure, not officially stated, on land forces by the Colonial Office, as for example the West Africa Frontier force; by the Foreign Office, as for example in British East Africa and Uganda, and by the Colonies, Crown and self-governing, so far as they paid their own and did not appear in notes on the Estimates. The best estimate he had been able to make of this was £3,250,000, making £21,000,000 on land forces other than those directly administered by the War Office, and, with £33,000,000 so administered, £54,000,000 on land forces in the Empire without counting supplemental Estimates. This enormous sum might be contrasted with the Naval expenditure of the Empire, officially stated at £42,000,000, from which, however, more than £500,000 for annuities ought to be deducted, or else this money would figure twice over in the Works Account. £54,000,000 for land forces and £41,500,000 for sea forces made up an expenditure of £95,500,000 on defence in a normal year of peace. Now, that sum was vastly greater than the combined military and naval expenditure of any two Powers in the world—say France and Germany. Though he for one supported the Government in the enormous Naval Estimates which they had placed before the House, he could not, on such Estimates as had been placed before the Committee this year, blindly support their military expenditure.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave the Committee last year a pledge, which the present Chancellor of the Exchequer repeated this year, that the Government looked forward confidently to a considerable reduction of the normal military expenditure within the next two years—that was to say, this year, or next year. If they were to have that considerable reduction even next year, the House ought to be shown this year, in these debates, the manner in which it was going to be accomplished. In his belief and in that also of many of the experts, the only means of accomplishing these reductions was by the abolition of the linked battalion system. On that point there had been always a difference of opinion between the late and the present Secretary for War. The present Secretary for War had always shown to the House, with weight and truth, that large depôts for training the men were preferable to small depôts or linked battalions. Let the right hon. Gentleman have the courage of his views and adopt his own scheme, which was the only way of accomplishing the saving which the Government proposed to effect. There were some on that side of the House, he knew, who clung somewhat blindly to what was called the Cardwell system; and there were some who objected to the abolition of the linked battalion system if they could see any other way to saving the money. But no other way had been pointed out. The number of troops in India, in Egypt, and in South Africa, had been considerably increased; and they had been forced to increase the troops at home although they knew they did not require them. They had continued to swell the number of battalions at home by automatic increases, by the number of battalions abroad. That system had been condemned by many of the best officers, and by some men who had had enormous experience of the War Office. These were now joined by the man who had always been the apostle of the Cardwell system, Lord Wolseley, who had admitted that he had become persuaded that the linked battalion system must be given up. Now, the Government had shown evidently that night that they had been halting between two opinions. They had, or the leading men amongst them had, already made up their minds, but they had not yet had the courage to come before the House as a whole and say frankly that they had changed their views on many points, and that they had fully accepted the views of the Reorganisation Committee.

The Secretary of State for War said that the Estimates were interim Estimates. They were Estimates of enormous size which were placed before the Committee at a time when the demands of the Fleet were gigantic beyond all conception of former years. Hon. Members and their constituents would feel a great strain in supporting such large Estimates. Could hon. Members defend to their constituents the Estimates now before the Committee, especially when they were submitted merely as interim Estimates without any real defence of the existing military system which the House of Commons had condemned and which the Government themselves had condemned? He did not think hon. Members could defend the Estimates to thier constituents. The Secretary of State gave no real reason why the country had to wait so long for the great military reforms that were now proposed. It might be said that the faults in the present military system had only been revealed in the war. That was not the case, because many of the military advisers of the Government had for years expressed the views which were now about to be accepted. Even if it were the case it was a long time since the Report of the War Commission had been issued. Even if that Report had subsequently to be submitted to Lord Esher and his colleagues the Government had still time enough to make up their minds as to the general lines that ought to be adopted and submit their proposals to the House of Commons. The Government ought to have been able to say that they accepted the Report of the Committee, that the Army Corps system was gone, that the linked battalion system was gone, and that they accepted the whole of the Report. But they did not do that. The Government came to the House of Commons with these interim Estimates and asked them to accept them blindly, and believe that next year, perhaps, they might hear of something to their advantage. He was convinced that the Government must be driven out of the impossible situation in which they stood, and, at all events before discussion on Vote A and Vote 1 terminated, must make a clean breast of it to the House, compose their differences among themselves, and stand or fall by the Report of the War Commission.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) said the only argument used by the right hon. Gentleman which dealt with the subject matter of his Resolution on the Paper was that the language used was calculated to give the secretariat of the Defence Committee an exaggerated notion of its own importance. He himself did not attach any weight to that, because if the Prime Minister and the other members of the Defence Committee could not keep the secretariat in order it was useless to discuss the matter at all. He confessed that he did not know what justification there was for the statement of the Leader of the Opposition that the Government had partially accepted and partially repudiated the recommendations of the War Office Reconstitution Committee. All he understood from the statements of the Government was that they had adopted certain portions of the first Report of the Committee, and that they were taking time to consider the whole Report. They had established the Army Council, had appointed the Inspector-General, and had not repudiated anything. Having considered the Report they would come to a decision upon it and make that decision known. His individual hope was that, having thoroughly considered the Report of the Committee, the Government would adopt it as it stood and carry it out in its entirety. The scheme of the Committee was a complete scheme, it was logically argued out from beginning to end, and it appeared to him to be perfectly true, as the Committee said, that if they took this and left that they would spoil the whole.

He would not take part in the discussions on the Estimates because he was not going to flog a dead horse. The Committee was alive to the fact that certain principles which many hon. Members like the right hon. Gentleman opposite and himself had been fighting for years had now been acknowledged and endorsed. He would ask hon. Members to consider what was the position of the Secretary of State in the matter. The Estimates had been prepared and constitutional circumstances demanded that they should be submitted to Parliament at this period of the year. He maintained that the course adopted by his right hon. friend was a plain businesslike course. His right hon. friend was hardly responsible for the Estimates, but he was under the necessity to produce them whether he approved of them or not. It was quite premature to discuss the recommendations of the Committee, for two reasons. First of all they did not know the exact attitude of the Government in connection with the Report of that Committee, and secondly it was impossible for the Committee to discuss the Report on the Army Estimates, because they would also have to discuss the naval aspects. He, however, looked forward to two things, first an announcement from the Government that they had adopted the Report in its entirety, and secondly that they would be afforded an opportunity for a free discussion which would admit of the naval part of the problem assuming its proper place of priority. After that discussion he believed that the House would by a large majority approve of the action of the Government in accepting the Report.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said the Secretary of State for War commenced his speech with a quotation from "The Needy Knife-grinder." He would retort with another quotation from the same source, which was "Give you 6d.? I'd see you damned first." Having regard to the way in which the Estimates had been introduced the Committee would be justified in refusing to consider them. The Secretary of State for War apparently thought it was a sufficient defence to say that the Estimates were interim Estimates. No Minister in charge of a great spending Department had a right to say that. The Committee had a right to expect from the responsible Minister a statement as to the policy of the Department and the policy of the Government. Neither had a Minister a right to present Estimates of which he disapproved. Yet that was practically what the right hon. Gentleman did. He said he hoped they were the last of their kind that would be presented, and that changes of considerable magnitude were necessary in order to produce an efficient Army. That was an unconstitutional and most unheard of position for a Minister of the Crown to take up in presenting Army Estimates. He was bound not merely to place before the House Estimates upon which he could rely, but he should also be able to state fully and frankly what in his opinion was the best policy to pursue with regard to the Army. But here there were members of the Government directly in antagonism with one another. The Government spoke on great questions and small questions, not with one, but two voices. The House was also treated with scant courtesy and consideration by the Government in the matter of the Report of the Esher Commission. The House was desired to commit itself in regard to the whole scope of this Committee but what was the opinion of the Government itself upon this matter? How far did they themselves intend to adopt those recommendations? The Secretary of State was committed up to the hilt, as was apparent from what he had just said, but that statement was made by him as a private individual, and in a matter of this kind the right hon. Gentleman had no right to speak as a private individual.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER asked what view he had expressed which he had admitted was not shared by his colleagues? He had expressed admiration for the Committee's recommendations, but he had said, as the Prime Minister had also said, that the Report must be carefully considered, and that the Report of no Committee could be binding on a Government.

Mr. BUCHANAN said that the right hon. Gentleman had expressed his approval of the recommendations in the main, and had spoken of them being applied *en bloc*.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Hear, hear!

Mr. BUCHANAN said that admission carried the question a step further. In accepting the proposal of the Committee for the formation of an Army Council and the appointment of an Inspector-General, and in putting down Votes corresponding to these changes, the Government accepted itself, and asked the House of Commons to accept, the cardinal principles of the full Esher scheme. And the Committee said the same thing, because they said if the Government accepted that proposal they thereby accepted what was really the foundation of the whole of the scheme. There were two or three points involved in the acceptance of this scheme which ought to be seriously considered. The Order in Council fixing the powers of the new Army Council had not yet been promulgated, so that the House was in the dark as to the intentions of the Government in that direction. The powers of the Board of Admiralty were governed much more by the Order in Council than by the Letters Patent; consequently it was of supreme importance that the House should know the terms of the Order in Council with regard to the position and powers of this new Army Council. Further, how was the position of the Secretary of State for War towards the Cabinet and towards Parliament affected? The Committee's Report contained elaborate and absurd proposals as to the organisation of the Army Council—proposals suggesting the most irrational conduct on the part of the military members. He believed that sensible men could be obtained to work the system, and that the absurdities suggested would not arise. It was not known how far the Government intended to carry out the proposals of the Report, but if those proposals were carried out in anything like the detail suggested in the Report the Secretary of State for War would be reduced almost to a cypher so far as power was concerned. The point of importance was not so much the power of the right hon. Gentleman in the Army Council or in the Cabinet, but his relations to the House of Commons and the country. Hitherto the Secretary of State had been ultimately responsible for everything done by the War Office, and could be brought to book by the House of Commons if necessary. That was a power not lightly to be surrendered, and it was to be hoped that in the Order in Council regard would be had to the desirability of maintaining the supreme power of the Secretary of State, so that in the future, as in the past, there would be one Minister actually responsible to the House of Commons.

But had this scheme, in its financial aspects, been carefully thought out, either by the Committee or by the Cabinet? The Government had not stated absolutely whether they were going to adopt the whole of Part II. of the Report, but it appeared probable that they would in the main adopt the recommendations. If they did so the Accountant-General and his Department were doomed, and the House was entitled to know what was to be substituted for a Department which, on the whole, had worked in the direction of economy. The Report itself stated—

> "Although the scheme proposed has not been worked out in complete detail, we are in a position to state that no increase of expenditure is involved."

It was absurd to ask the House to consent to such far-reaching changes in the Army system without a knowledge of all the details of the financial obligations involved. The first step had to be guarded against. Let the House once agree to the Estimates involving the institution of this Army Council, and they would be told that they had given away the principle and were committed to whatever schemes proposed by Lord Esher's Committee the Government might choose to adopt. As to the Estimates themselves, the economies claimed by the Secretary of State were not real economies at all, or the comparisons in the right hon. Gentleman's Memorandum were fallacious; they were meant for the public outside, not for Members of this House who could look into the details. The Estimates were guilty of almost every possible vice. They were interim Estimates; they did not indicate the real settled policy of the right hon. Gentleman or anyone else; they confessedly omitted charges which the Secretary of State knew would come in course of payment for 1st April onwards. Not a penny was included for the Somaliland War. The right hon. Gentleman had said that part of the current expenses of the expedition would be paid out of savings on other Votes. But there would be no savings on 1st April, unless the right hon. Gentleman had asked for a great deal more money than he wanted for other matters. And surely it was not suggested that the Treasury had given their consent in advance to the application to this purpose of possible savings on other Votes? The answer to that query was probably supplied by the Committee's Report, where it was stated that—

> "The War Office cannot commit the Treasury to expenditure not provided for in the Votes for the year."

For a Minister to say that a war was going on, but that he did not propose to ask the House to provide a single penny for its cost, was entirely without precedent; it was dishonest, and not treating the House fairly. The increases in the Estimates were real, the decreases unreal. The present year was being relieved at the expense of future years, when the right hon. Gentleman and his Party would not be responsible for the finances of the country. But worse than that was the proposal to relieve the finances of the present year at the expense of the taxpayers of India. That was shabby and mean. Could the right hon. Gentleman point to a single passage in the Financial Statement of the Government of India urgently demanding an immediate supply of particular armaments?

*Mr. **ARNOLD-FORSTER** pointed out that in any case the Government of India would pay for their guns.

Mr. **BUCHANAN** said that part of the policy of the Government of India was to develop their power of making both rifles and heavy guns, and they were increasing their capacity in that direction every year.

*Mr. **ARNOLD-FORSTER** was understood to say that these guns were supplied in response to a demand of the Government of India.

Mr. **BUCHANAN** held that as a matter of finance the course taken was a bad one, and that it simply amounted to thrusting an extra charge on the shoulders of the Indian taxpayer.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

CABINET RESIGNATIONS.

ADJOURNMENT (UNDER STANDING ORDER No. 10).

Mr. **JOHN ELLIS** (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) said in rising to move the Adjournment of the House he made no apology for making the Motion, because, if he could be amazed at anything in this Parliament, he should be amazed and was still astonished that the House had not had a statement and explanation before this from the Prime Minister. The method of obtaining such explanation by moving the adjournment was a clumsy method, but it was the only one the House now had of bringing matters of this kind before Parliament. There were in this case aggravating circumstances which alone demanded that it should be gone into without further delay. The right hon. Gentleman earlier in the evening appeared to regard it as a purely personal matter, but he (Mr. Ellis) did not so regard it. It was no personal matter at all. The Prime Minister was also the Leader of this House, and in both capacities he had a duty to perform to the House in explaining why his colleagues in the Cabinet resigned. One would have to go a long way back to find a precedent for the resignation of five members of the Cabinet—nearly one-third in numbers, and more than one-half in weight of authority and reputation. The last precedent he could find which was at all similar was that of 1867, when the late Marquess of Salisbury, Lord Carnarvon, and General Peel resigned from Mr. Disraeli's Government over the Reform Bill. On that occasion there was a complete explanation on the part of the outgoing Ministers, and Mr. Disraeli entered fully into the whole circumstances. He did not impute anything against the right hon. Gentleman's personal honour, but in this case there were exceptional circumstances which accentuated the necessity for this explanation. What was the diary of events in this matter? The noble Lord the Member for Ealing had given a very clear and succinct account to his constituents from which he would quote—

> "On the last day of the session the Cabinet was summoned to consider this fiscal question in connection with certain propositions that were put before us by the Prime Minister; and

> there were two documents under our consideration—the one on Insular Free Trade, and the other was a document which contained substantive propositions which we proposed on behalf of the Government to officially put forward. These propositions embraced preferential tariffs and the taxation of food. The Cabinet unanimously agreed to the publication of the first document. They differed as to the acceptance of the proposals in the second. The discussion was adjourned, and a Cabinet was summoned for 14th September, to further consider the matter."

On the 9th September the Member for West Birmingham sent his letter of resignation to the Prime Minister. On the 14th September another Cabinet was held—

> "At that Cabinet both Mr. Ritchie and myself understood that the old proposals were still before us, though I admit that the turn which the conversation at times took both puzzled and perplexed us. We could not agree. After the Cabinet, we four, the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Balfour, Mr. Ritchie, and myself, met in my room at the India Office. With a recollection of the discussions fresh in our memories, we surveyed the situation, and we unanimously came to the decision that we had no alternative but all to send in our resignations. The Duke of Devonshire undertook that commission on behalf of us all, and he saw the Prime Minister on the matter. We were none of us then aware of Mr. Chamberlain's resignation, but we all knew that, so long as he was a member of the Government, the question of preferential tariffs could not be eliminated from its programme. There was a Cabinet next day dealing with other matters. After that Cabinet was over we four met again, and as I understood there was no change in the situation, I, in accordance with the agreement arrived at, sent in my resignation. I made it perfectly clear in my letter that I believed Mr. Chamberlain was still a member of the Government, and that preferential tariffs in some shape or other were still to be discussed. The Prime Minister, in a most kind letter, acknowledged my resignation, and the day afterwards, on takingup the newspapers in the country, I read with surprise the correspondence between him and Mr. Chamberlain, and Mr. Chamberlain's resignation.

On the 18th September the resignation of four Minister appeared in *The Times*. On 1st October, the Prime Minister spoke at Sheffield, the next day the Duke of Devonshire sent his letter of resignation to the Prime Minister, and on 6th October that resignation was made public. That was a most remarkable and unprecedented series of events. Let the House remember the high character of the men who left the Cabinet in this manner. The Duke of Devonshire was in public life when most of the Members of the House were hardly out of their small clothes, the noble Lord the Member for Ealing had been a Member of the House for a great many years, Lord Balfour was held in the highest esteem in Scotland, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had made his mark in the House as one of its distinguished Members. It was one of the most remarkable events in our Parliamentary history, yet, down to the present moment, there had been no explanation from the Prime Minister, the head of the Cabinet, as to those resignations.

There were three salient features in this case. In the first place one very extraordinary circumstance was that the communication of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham to the Prime Minister was not only a letter of resignation but a plan of campaign. This man, who was going out of the Cabinet, actually dictated in the last sentence of that remarkable letter what the policy of the Cabinet was to be. Even a more significant circumstance was the way in which that letter was dealt with by the Prime Minister. He desired to choose his language in this matter, and he would say this letter was withheld. What was generally said about it was that it had been concealed, and he was compelled to admit that such a statement would be true. At any rate, the Prime Minister on the 14th September, while having that letter in his possession, allowed his colleagues to resign under the impression that preferential tariffs were before the Cabinet and that Mr. Chamberlain still retained his seat in the Cabinet. The right hon. Gentleman did not disclose the fact then that he had the letter. These circumstances demanded explanation, and he thought that would not be denied by the Prime Minister himself, inasmuch as in speaking to his constituents in January he had let fall the phrase "my own personal honour" in alluding to this matter.

He thought the right hon. Gentleman should be glad of the opportunity, created by the Motion, of clearing away what must be in the nature of a calumny, if the facts wore a different complexion. The second point was the nature of the second document. They had it on the authority of the noble Lord that this contained "propositions embracing preferential tariffs and taxation on food." These were made by the Prime Minister for the sanction of his colleagues. That was a protectionist policy on the part of the head of the Government. What had he now to say to this? He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not treat the matter in an airy or cavalier way; but would make it plain why it was that the House had not been given, according to precedent, full information of these transactions at the earliest moment. The serious feature of the whole affair was that the right hon. Gentleman had not, since he had been able to appear in the House, made that full and frank communication to the House which always occurred when political changes of this kind took place. He had gone on day by day without giving that clear and frank account to which the House was entitled of what had happened. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh."] A number of those Gentlemen who cried "Oh" would never see the Benches they sat on again after the general election. Mr. Disraeli on the occasion in 1867 to which he had referred had spoken of "that frank communication to the House which always occurs when changes of that kind happen." The Prime Minister, with all his winning courtesy to Members individually, had in this matter showed a lack of respect to the House, and a disregard of what was due by one in his position to the House. That was the principal reason which weighed with him in now moving the Adjournment of the House.

*MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby) said be only desired to add two short precedents to the facts brought forward by the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was unable, from causes everybody in the House regretted, to take the earliest opportunity of explaining to the House what had taken place during the recess. When Parliament was sitting, such an explanation should have come immediately after the resignations. That was what happened in the case of Lord Carnarvon when he resigned his position in the Government, in 1878. Lord Carnarvon resigned on the 24th of January, and on the next day, the 25th, the position was explained by Lord Beaconsfield in the House of Lords, who, on that occasion, followed Lord Carnarvon and dealt with the statement he had made. The other precedent to which he desired to draw attention was the resignation of Lord Palmerston in the recess of 1851—in December. The House assembled on February 3rd, 1852, and immediately after the Address had been moved and seconded, Sir Benjamin Hall, then the Member for Marylebone, asked for explanations of the circumstances which had led to an alteration in the Cabinet, and asserted that such explanations ought always to be given at the earliest possible moment, unless, as happened in 1828, the individuals concerned were not present in the House. He submitted to the House that the precedent of the debate of 1852 was very much on all fours with the point he was now pressing upon the Prime Minister. At that time all the parties concerned were in the House, and an explanation was at once given of all the circumstances which had led to the dismissal of Lord Palmerston. The rule seemed to have been laid down that when the parties were not present the explanation could not take place, but as soon as they were the explanation ought to be given, and the House put in full possession of all the circumstances. He had only one other point to mention in conclusion. It was an unusual thing for the Opposition by a Motion to have to force an explanation of this kind, because such an explanation ought to be volunteered to the House as soon as all the parties who were concerned could be present to take part in the debate. He begged leave to second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. John Ellis.*)

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): Mr. Speaker, you have ruled, and I am glad that you have ruled, that it is competent for me to-night, on the Motion that the House do now adjourn, to make that explanation, or to give that narrative, which the hon. Gentleman who moved the adjournment of the House appears so ardently to desire. For my own part I have not now, and I never have had, any objection to giving an account of the course, as I understand it, of Cabinet and Governmental policy during the last six months, except such objection as may find its origin in the fact that these explanations lead sometimes to personal recriminations, and that little good, perhaps, is done by dealing from a personal point of view with questions which, after all, have a far larger significance than any personalities can give us, and that debates like the one which the hon. Gentleman has initiated may perhaps more readily feed the curiosity or the interest of those who care little, and are perhaps very little competent to give an opinion upon the really difficult problems connected with fiscal reform—[OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"]—easy to persons of the hon. Gentleman's intelligence, but difficult to the ordinary man—so that those who are but little capable of dealing with these problems are happy to occupy themselves with personal gossip and personal controversy. I am confident—I hope the hon. Gentleman will not believe that I suppose that it is with this purely gossiping and personal object that he has moved the adjournment of the debate. What I am endeavouring to point out to the House is that, though I do not shrink from giving the fullest account of all that has occurred during the last six months, I cannot honestly pretend that I think any great public interest will be served by the discussion which the hon. Gentleman has initiated. The House is well acquainted with the fact that it was through no fault of mine that I could not take part in our earlier debates; and if it be true, as perhaps it is true, that neither the House nor the country would have been content had I remained permanently silent under the personal charges that have been levelled against me, I am obliged to the hon. Gentleman for having given me an opportunity of dealing with the subject. But I hope he will allow me, in delivering a speech of, I trust, not inordinate length, to go back to what everybody will admit is the beginning of the crisis, as it is commonly described, the Parliamentary crisis with which the hon. Gentleman has concerned himself to-night.

If the House remembers the condition of affairs that came about when my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham made his memorable speech in May last, they will know that, though no novel doctrine was propounded in that speech, though nothing was said by my right hon. friend which had not been said before by responsible statesmen in this country, nevertheless the public interest excited by that speech was of a wholly novel kind, and people felt for the first time that the question of fiscal reform had ceased to be a question of, I will not say academic interest, but of interest outside the immediate domain of practical politics—that for the first time it had been brought within those limits and that every man would have to make up his mind—[OPPOSITION cries of "Hear, hear!"]—even though he belonged to the Opposition, for even they have minds—[AN HON. MEMBER: They have convictions also.]—every man would have to make up his mind what course he would have to take upon a problem for the first time presented to the country in a shape which the country would have to decide. The House will admit, those at all events who paid attention to the currents and cross-currents of public opinion at that time, that there was a considerable disturbance of the public mind, a great disorganisation of general opinion, that it was felt that a new problem and a new question had been thrown down for discussion which might make, and which probably would make, considerable changes in Governments and Parties. [AN HON. MEMBER: It ought not to have been introduced at all.] Well, I expressly said that the problem was an old one, but what I said was that for the first time in our generation—I do not know how old the hon. Gentleman is who interrupted me—it had come before us for practical discussion. I have been greatly blamed for the course that I took on that occasion. I felt, and I think the House will admit that I was not wrong in feeling, that Members of this House, many of them, were much perplexed by the new situation, that the great majority of us have not been accustomed to deal with these economic problems, which were so familiar to our grandfathers sixty years ago, so that to many they came with a sense of surprise, and that Members of this House, and persons interested in politics outside this House felt they required time to consider questions which, however fully debated between the forties and the fifties, has since the fifties occupied but little of the time of the Members of this House or of Parliaments preceding the present one.

There were a certain number of medical advisers who, diagnosing the situation, thought that the best remedy for the disease was a debate in this House, and I was much blamed for not interrupting the ordinary and normal course of public business by giving an opportunity for that debate. I must admit that the doctors who most confidently made that prescription were the Members who wanted to make the speeches which were to cure the disease, and that I did not find in the general opinion of the House any great anxiety to have a debate upon that subject. There was a perfectly well-recognised and constitutional method of forcing that debate, had it been desired. I have been told that it was an improper course for the Leader of the House to suggest that a vote of censure should be used as a vehicle for discussing this subject. Some persons may have thought there was force in that observation last June; they can hardly think so in the present month of March, because it was on a vote of censure that the House has discussed the matter for six days during my absence; and I should really be curious to know whether it was improper to discuss on a vote of censure last June what it was eminently proper to discuss on a vote of censure this February. I admit that I took the course I did of refusing, short of a vote of censure, to interrupt the normal course of legislation with some regret. I spent sleepless nights in wondering whether there was, indeed, in this House some "mute, inglorious" Adam Smith or Ricardo — mute and therefore inglorious by my action. I have since been amply reassured, and I do not know that there is any reason for deploring that the ample debate of which the House has had the enjoyment, or even surfeit ["Oh"], at all events a full meal, within the last three weeks, took place in February, 1904, rather than in June, 1903.

It seemed to me, on the contrary, that it was most desirable that some months, at all events, should be employed in accumulating information and statistics on the present position of trade in this country, and in considering, each man for himself, and as far as we could for the benefit of our neighbours, the broad economic principles which ought to underlie the policy of this country. To the best of our ability we, on this Bench, set ourselves to work to supply both of those needs. I am quite aware that the statistics prepared by the Board of Trade have been described as undigested statistics; but I am convinced that nobody who knows what the modern science of statistics is — how difficult statistics are to prepare, how much they are a matter of trained consideration— will regard the great volume of statistics prepared by the Board of Trade, which is a mine of information for all who desire to consider the concrete facts of the existing situation—will regard that great work as a mass of undigested statistics. I speak with more diffidence and more humility of my own very humble attempt to bring certain broad economic reasonings before the attention of my fellow-countrymen. That effort has been described, I think, by my noble friend the Duke of Devonshire as an academic effort. I do not disclaim the epithet, which, indeed, as coming from the Chancellor of one University addressed to the Chancellor of another University, cannot be otherwise than highly complimentary. Well, we did our best. I, at all events, worked hard in the middle of a very exacting session to make clear the lines of reasoning on which I thought people ought to proceed. The Cabinet, as everybody knows, were even at that time divided upon the subject of fiscal reform, but it was practically agreed among us that the subject should not be raised, and that we should put it on one side for decision.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: Till the last day of the session.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Precisely. We put it on one side for decision until the work of the session was over. There were other questions of great and pressing importance on which I am glad to think the Cabinet were agreed—questions of foreign policy, questions of domestic policy—and it would have been folly to imperil those by a premature discussion upon a subject which could not come up for practical consideration until the event which the hon. Gentleman looks forward to with such pleasure—the next general election—was past and gone. At the beginning of August, in preparation for that Cabinet to which the hon. Gentleman has alluded, I circulated among my colleagues the pamphlet which has since become public property; and at the Cabinet, the date of which I forget—it was a late Cabinet in August before the House separated—they were in possession of that pamphlet and of certain tentative suggestions which I threw out for their consideration. Here I must frankly say I think I have some reason to complain of the course which was pursued by my noble friend the Member for Middlesex. I have not much to complain of in the course he has pursued, and I trust nothing I say to-night will wound any of those who have so long served with me in public offices; but I am bound to tell the House that I do think that in this matter I have been somewhat ill-used. My noble friend made a statement with which I have not the least desire to quarrel. I am not sure that I quite understood it, but I should certainly have never made any public criticism upon it had it not been the foundation of repeated attacks made on me by Lord Rosebery and other members of the Opposition. They interpreted my noble friend's statement as meaning that I had come down to this Cabinet in August, that I had presented a public pamphlet on one side representing a certain body of doctrine, another pamphlet, not yet published, representing an opposite set of doctrines, and said to my colleagues, "Well, one of these two you had better have. Toss up and see which you prefer."

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing): I did not say that.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I know that my noble friend did not say that. I do not complain that my noble friend said it. I complain that my noble friend let it be said.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: This is a matter which affects to a certain extent my veracity.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Not at all.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: When Lord Rosebery put the interpretation upon my words which my right hon. friend denied I wrote to the newspaper to say that my right hon. friend was perfectly correct in repudiating the gloss which Lord Rosebery put upon my words.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am grateful to my noble friend for his interruption, because it makes exactly clear what I wanted to tell the House. What I complain of is that my noble friend let it be said. He let it be said in one speech by Lord Rosebery; he let it be said in two speeches by Lord Rosebery; I think he let it be said in three speeches by Lord Rosebery. Lord Rosebery found it easier to preach a sermon on the text furnished him by my noble friend than to support a policy unanimously accepted, as I understand it, alleged to be unanimously accepted, by Gentlemen on the other side of the House. And when was it that my noble friend came forward and corrected this misinterpretation of Lord Rosebery? Was it after the first speech of Lord Rosebery, or the second, or the third? It was not till after I myself had told the public that the thing was totally untrue. It was in answer to the *Daily Mail*, I think, that my noble friend made this tardy explanation. It was not until after my noble friend was asked by the *Daily Mail* how he reconciled his statement with my statement that he made the tardy explanation to which he has just——

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: That is not so.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Perhaps when my noble friend speaks to-night he will give the dates. I am perfectly confident that my noble friend's contradiction of this calumny never appeared until I myself contradicted it in Manchester on 12th January. This is an episode. Let us return to the main current of the drama. I had hoped, though with a diminishing degree of confidence, even up to that last

Cabinet in August, that I should be able to retain all the friends who in these long years had served the King with me, that there need be no necessary break-up of the Government. I admit that it was with diminishing confidence that I held that view; but that confidence wholly vanished soon after, and for more than one reason. In the first place, I felt that if those members of the Government who differed altogether from me on the question of fiscal reform had really thought an arrangement was possible I must do them the justice to believe that they would have suggested a compromise. I am quite sure they desired to keep the Party together. I am quite sure the last thing they wished to do was to break from us; and, therefore, had there been any arrangement consistent with the views on fiscal reform which I held, and which I hold, which they were willing to accept, I am sure it would have been suggested by one or other of them. No such suggestion came. I do not believe that in the whole six months that elapsed between the speech of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham in May and the date of the final Cabinet on 14th September—I do not think any suggestion of a compromise was made by either my noble friend or my right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer. And undoubtedly from their point of view they were quite right. They were wholly at variance with me, and therefore naturally they did not suggest a compromise. We shall come to that directly. But there was another reason which made me, about the period of which I am now speaking, feel that the chances of keeping the Government intact were practically at an end, which I speak of with more diffidence, and which I think cannot be regarded, and I do not put it forward, as in any sense legal evidence. If I quote gossip it is not because it is gossip only, but because it represents a certain amount of what goes on, especially among persons who live in one society, who agree on most points, and who have an enormous number of common friends and acquaintances. All the gossip that reached my ears led me to believe that my noble friend and my right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer had by that time themselves wholly abandoned any hope of remaining members of a Government who were pledged to fiscal reform; and I heard that speculations even were rife as to what would occur when in consequence of the break-up of the Government anticipated last September I should have resigned my place as Prime Minister. Every kind of suggested combination reached my ears, though, by the way, as regards hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, I do not remember that they came through any of them. I do not think the combinations I heard of promised sufficient stability to make it worth while for right hon. Gentlemen opposite to have anything to do with them. I did not really pay very much attention to the rumours current, I believe, in all political society and on both sides of the House; but as a matter of fact, I had not the smallest intention of resigning then. I had not the smallest intention of resigning in September whatever happened. The hon. Gentleman opposite who moved this Motion, said there had never been anything so catastrophic as the resignation of five members of a Cabinet.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: That was not my phrase.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, I think I have improved on the hon. Gentleman's phrase. He said he knew of no precedent, and I admit that I know of no precedent; but my view was, and I think I was right, that it was contrary to my public duty to abandon my post as long as I retained the confidence of the King and of this House. And, quite frankly, it never occurred to me that another course was open to me.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: What about this House and the country?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know that that has any relation to the course I have explained. I believe the House on both sides will think I was right. I believe they do think I was absolutely right, and I believe they would have regarded me with considerable contempt, not merely my own friends but hon. Gentlemen opposite, to whom I am a legitimate subject of criticism, and that they would not have felt that I had risen in their estimation if I had shrunk from a task, rendered indeed difficult by the separation from old friends, but, as I think I shall show, far from impossible. Well, Sir, I therefore, in September, came to the conclusion that some break up of the Cabinet was inevitable, and I had altered the view which I had previously held. I want to be absolutely frank with the House in all these matters. I had come to the conclusion, fully expressed, I think, in my published letters and speeches, that it was not within the region of practical politics to suggest a tax on food in this country, even although the interests of free trade—I put aside altogether the Imperial question—would have been greatly promoted thereby. I mean even supposing that were possible. No human being, I presume, would deny that there is a conceivable concession on the part of the protectionists in Canada, combined with a conceivable minimum of a duty on food in this country, which would enormously subserve the interests of free trade. That, I take it, is absolutely undeniable, and I have never heard anybody deny it.

Lord HUGH CECIL (Greenwich) interrupted with an observation not heard in the gallery.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not know my noble friend denied it.

Lord HUGH CECIL: I deny that it would in the long run.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: My noble friend has made a perfectly legitimate point, and he has given me an opportunity of explaining what I mean. Nobody denies that supposing, if he likes, that Canada gave up her protective policy on great branches of trade for an indefinite period, and that you could purchase that concession by a small duty on corn—that might be good or bad, but it would be free trade. I think I heard a murmur of dissent, but I am convinced that it is not from anybody who has considered in his own mind what free trade means. I came to the conclusion, which I have just described to the House, in the course of the recess, and my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham had come to a similar conclusion which had been expressed in a letter which has since become public property. It was in these circumstances that the Cabinet of 14th September assembled. My right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham had, in the letter which I have described, expressed his view that public opinion was not ripe for any taxation of foodstuffs, and he had also expressed his view that for personal reasons of his own he would prefer to carry on the propaganda in which he was so profoundly interested in an independent capacity; and I was aware of that fact when the Cabinet met on 14th September. That fact, which I have never denied, or even suggested a denial of, has been twisted—not by my noble friend, not by my right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, but by the worst of all supporters, the supporters that do not belong to our own Party—into the foundations of an accusation that I kept from my two late colleagues a fact material to their own course during the Cabinet of 14th September. A more preposterous statement—a statement more absolutely contradicted by my right hon. friends, and which, if true, would be more discreditable to my right hon. friends—I cannot imagine. Now let me suppose for a moment that it is true. It would mean that my right hon. friends' objection to fiscal reform, as I conceive it, is not in the least based on the essential policy of that plan, but based on a personal objection to the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, or to his methods, or to his speeches. I am quite sure they would be the first to refuse to accept such an explanation as that. Then it appears to be thought to be the business of the Prime Minister for the time being to announce to his Cabinet that any one of their colleagues has indicated that if a certain policy is pursued he would have to reconsider his position. That is a view of the duty of the Prime Minister which can only occur to those who have never seen anything of the interior of Cabinet life. It used to be said—I do not know whether the distinguished biographer of Mr. Gladstone supports it or not—that Lord Palmerston pointed to a drawer and said, "That is full of Mr. Gladstone's resignations." Does any human being suppose that every time that Mr. Gladstone explained to Lord Palmerston that he would have to reconsider his position if Lord Palmerston did not carry out this or that policy, Lord Palmerston came down with a long face and told all the Cabinet that his Chancellor of the Exchequer took a different view of the subject from himself? Why, Sir, of course it is left to the Minister himself to tell his colleagues that if a certain course is pursued he would feel it impossible to remain a member of the Government. And that course was actually pursued by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. It was not my business to do it. It was his business to do it if he thought fit. And he did think fit. And he distinctly told the Cabinet that if preference was omitted from the official Government programme he would, for purely personal reasons, explained in his letter to me, not feel it possible to remain one of His Majesty's Ministers. I am quite aware that my noble friend and my right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer did not hear that observation.

MR. RITCHIE (Croydon): I beg pardon; I heard it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I thought he had not heard it.

MR. RITCHIE: I did.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, then, Sir, we really need not argue the question any further, because they knew absolutely everything that I knew.

MR. RITCHIE: No, no!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think it would be convenient to have that interruption developed.

MR. RITCHIE: I did not know my right hon. friend had a letter in his pocket, dated some days previous, intimating that the right hon. Gentleman desired to leave the Cabinet, in fact placing his resignation in my right hon. friend's hands. That is what we did not know, though some members of the Cabinet did know.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The only difference between my right hon. friend and myself is that he seems to think there is a great distinction between that which is written and that which is spoken. I can assure him that I take a different view; it would make no difference to me whether he said the words or wrote the words; and that which I say of my right hon. friend I say of the Member for West Birmingham, I see no distinction between what he wrote to me and what he said to the Cabinet. Whether he said the words through the medium of pen and paper or through the medium of his vocal chords properly exercised does not seem to me to make the smallest difference in anything relevant to this discussion. Well, then, my two right hon. friends knew at that Cabinet all that I knew. I knew it by writing, they knew it by speech; but we both knew it, we all knew it. I was, personally, quite confident that my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham would carry out his view, though he had not sent his formal resignation. I was as convinced of that as I was convinced, knowing his opinions, that my right hon. friend would not consent to remain in a Government which desired to carry out fiscal reform. [AN HON. MEMBER: Fiscal Reform!] This brings me to a personal question, which is, I think, relevant to the discussion at that Cabinet meeting. Everybody has formulated the difference of opinion which separates those who agree with me from those who agree with right hon. Gentlemen opposite. I formulate it in this way, and I believe it is an accurate definition—the right hon. Gentlemen are in favour of a policy of *laissez faire* on all questions of fiscal arrangements, while I am against a policy of *laissez faire*, and in favour of fiscal reform. I was constantly endeavouring during that Cabinet of the 14th to get some kind of decision on this question of fiscal reform; but I ought to say quite frankly to the House that I approached that Cabinet in a somewhat different spirit from that in which a Prime Minister in ordinary times approaches a Cabinet. I came there quite clear that this House, the country, the Cabinet itself were determined that there should be a policy in which the Cabinet could agree. I was equally clear what that policy should be so long as I was Prime Minister; and so long as the Government remained what it was that policy was to be one I since expressed at Sheffield and in other speeches, and in writing, and which I have consistently upheld since my first utterance in this House after my right hon. friend the Member for Birmingham had made his famous address.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): What about settled convictions?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I was coming to them. Unfortunately, as the House knows, I was too ill to attend the discussion on fiscal reform during the debates on the Address. Passionately as I love a discussion in this House, I am sorry to say the same discussion served up cold has not that appetising effect on me that the real original article hot from the spit must have on everybody who has been long a Member of this Assembly. But I have tried to make myself acquainted with what passed in these debates; and I noticed that the Leader of the Opposition brought up in his initial speech the suggestion that I was "a reed shaken by the wind," that I was without an idea on political economy or fiscal problems until the subject was started unexpectedly in May last; and he quoted a phrase, perhaps a foolish or infelicitous phrase, I used in a speech which is in itself a refutation of the inference drawn from it. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to suppose that I had no settled convictions on the great underlying economic problems with which we have to deal. In that very speech I expressed a very strong opinion on these underlying problems; but if he would take the trouble to look back at another speech I delivered in this House in his absence, when the whole of the Front Bench opposite were taking a holiday —it was on the last day before the Whitsuntide recess, and the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean started a Motion which for some reason or other was not looked at favourably by his own Front Bench, who were all absent—playing golf or otherwise enjoying themselves. I then made a speech which I respectfully think is worthy of mention. I read it myself not very long ago. It embodies in a not inconvenient form almost all the root principles of the proposition I have been endeavouring to instil into the country ever since. That was delivered a month before the speech to which the right hon. Gentleman referred; and I think I may dismiss the question of settled convictions with only this further explanation, that, as everybody looking at my speech will see, it was not to the broad principles underlying tariff reform that I was referring, but to the specially complicated problem presented by preference, complicated not because of the economic difficulties, not because they were difficulties not capable of being dealt with, but because of the difficulties arising from the public opinion of two self-governing communities being at difference; and I said—I wish I could withdraw the statement—that I was not aware how it was possible on such a basis to found any great scheme of preferential duties. I thought that then, and I think it now. I may have had many faults in this controversy, but I think few will be keen to urge against me inconsistency—if inconsistency be a fault.

Well, now let us consider for a moment what is the charge brought against me to justify the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division in moving the Adjournment of the House. That charge has been crudely formulated in this form. It has been asserted, not, I think, by any responsible stateman on either side of the House, and least of all by my right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer or by my noble friend the Member for Middlesex—it has been suggested that I jockeyed—I am not a racing man, but jockeyed, I think, is the phrase—my two right hon. friends out of the Cabinet by keeping from them the fact that the Member for West Birmingham had resigned. That is the charge. Was ever a charge more foolish or baseless urged against a public man in this country? In the first place, as a matter of fact, the resignation, or the intended resignation, of my right hon. friend was not a secret, for he declared it in the Cabinet, and he was heard by my two right hon. friends. In the next place, had he not said it, had he not been heard, what relevance had it to the question whether my two right hon. friends could have remained in the Cabinet? What drove them out of the Cabinet? A difference of opinion with the head of it, as they themselves have stated in the most explicit terms. They have, indeed, indicated that probably they might have served His Majesty as Ministers for a few hours more had they known that my right hon. friend was going to resign, but not more than for a few hours. My noble friend the Member for Middlesex has told us that, though there was a misunderstanding, that misunderstanding would have been dissipated as soon as he had seen my letter published in the cheap pamphlet form accessible even to the millionaires of the Liberal Party.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: What I said was that I could not remain a member of the Government after the speech you made in Sheffield.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I apologise to my noble friend. I confused him with his neighbour. It was my right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer who told us at Croydon that he could not have remained a member of the Government after my letter to my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham, which had been since then published.

*MR. RITCHIE: Hear, hear!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It was my noble friend who said that he could not have survived the Sheffield speech. If I remember rightly, the Cabinet was held on 14th September, and the letter to the Member for West Birmingham was published on 17th September. The Sheffield speech was made on 1st October, therefore the only results of the misunderstanding of my two right hon. friends is this, that one of them would have been enabled for three days and the other for a fortnight to remain members of His Majesty's Government. Now, I make no complaint. I think that my right hon. friends have been grossly ill-used about it. They have never complained themselves. It has been all made for them by their new admirers. I have always had the highest opinion of my right hon. friends; but I never knew what great men they were until they resigned. They never pretended for a moment that the misunderstanding had the smallest effect on the substantial issue whether they should, or should not, remain members of the Government pledged to fiscal reform. I therefore venture to think that they had no substantial complaint to urge against me. On the other hand, I freely admit that I have no substantial complaint to urge against them, if they will allow me to say so. There is one relatively small matter I regret. It appears, though I did not realise it until a comparatively late stage of this history, that there had been formed within the Cabinet a sort of second Cabinet pledged to each other by bonds of mutual confidence in connection with this subject of fiscal reform. There is nothing dishonourable in that, but I think it is unfortunate.

*MR. RITCHIE: What does my right hon. friend refer to? I know nothing about it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I had inferred chiefly from phrases used by the Duke of Devonshire that he had been in constant consultation with my noble friend and my right hon. friend all through this crisis, and that each felt that he could not act on his own responsibility without the consent of the others.

*MR. RITCHIE: We had no consultation whatever until after the Cabinet of the 14th. We never met before.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I confess that I had good reason for taking a different view of the situation; but, of course, I accept my right hon. friend's word.

*MR. RITCHIE: We never met or had any consultation whatever until after the Cabinet of the 14th.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not question the right hon. Gentleman's statement at all. [OPPOSITION cries of "Withdraw."] I do not press the point at all. But had it been so, there would have been nothing dishonourable in it. I do not think it is the best way of carrying on Government by Cabinet, but it would not have been a stain on the right hon. Gentleman's honour. I am glad my right hon. friend has made that contradiction, because it removes the last suggestion of bitterness that should accompany what must be the painful process of separation. There has been an amputation, but I am glad it was performed under antiseptic conditions, and there is no wound left, no feeling on his part or mine that either of us has adopted any course or done anything which may leave any stain of bitterness on a political or personal friendship which has gone on through so many years. I do not suppose that the House will ask me to give any explanation as to my relations with my noble friend the Duke of Devonshire. [OPPOSITION cries of "Yes."] He has himself given an account of what occurred in the House of Lords. In certain particulars I think he has unintentionally made a slight error of statement on certain matters of fact; but I have not the slightest desire to enter upon them, nor do I think any material fell from him about which I need trouble. I do not think anybody suggests that I have behaved badly to him. If it be true, as he thinks, that I was betrayed into a correspondence unduly controversial in connection with his resignation, I am sorry that should have been so. On the other hand, I have nothing to complain of; even the manner of his resignation and the time of it I have long forgotten. The character of my noble friend the Duke of Devonshire is one of the assets of public life in this country. It is beyond attack and beyond criticism; and if we have unfortunately differed on this question, if the amount and the extent of our differences came to me with the suddenness of surprise, betraying me into unduly heated language, I should never forget the service he has rendered to English public life, or how he came forward in a great crisis of our national history to play a part which will have a permanent effect on the fortunes of this country.

I hope that I have at all events satisfied the curiosity of the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division. I venture to think that I have done nothing which the strictest critic of this House has any reason to reproach me with. I had to deal with a difficult situation; none will deny that. That I have striven to maintain, as far as it could be maintained, the unity of the great Party to which I belong will be admitted even by those whom I have been unsuccessful in retaining in our fold, and even those opposite may perhaps think that had I had predecessors in the course I have adopted they would find themselves in less difficulty now than they would otherwise be. I do not wish to dwell on this aspect of the question, but I venture to point out to the House that, in striving as I have striven, and frankly admit I have striven, throughout all these difficult months to maintain the unity of the Party of which for the time I am the responsible leader, I have never for one instant varied from publicly declared principles of my own, never have I wavered from statements which I have made before the crisis arose. I have been accused, for example—and the statement of fact is true—of having changed, somewhat modified, my views as to the possibility of inducing the people of this country for any object, however intimately connected with free trade or Empire, to consent to a tax on food. But the principles which animated me, though they have been decorated with a great many uncomplimentary terms by hon. Members opposite, were declared publicly before the right hon. Member for West Birmingham's speech was in the hands of the public. It was on the same day he spoke at Birmingham that I spoke to a deputation with regard to duties on corn; and there I explained, as I still hold, however great the objects which might be attained by a small tax upon wheat, it was impossible ever to impose such a tax unless you had with you the hearts and the consciences of the people of this country. Exactly the thing I stated before and to that opinion I still hold; and if anyone thinks that I have modified my opinions on the other questions connected with fiscal reform, I can with all modesty and humility refer them to that speech I made in the very earliest days of the controversy in May last, in which I surveyed the whole problem opened up by my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham. I think if a candid survey be thus taken of the part I have played in this matter it will be felt, not only that I have striven, successfully or unsuccessfully, but at all events to the best of my ability, to carry out my duties as a leader of a

Party. In striving for this great object I have never for a moment, or even for a hair's breadth, varied from the principles of the fiscal policy which I had laid down before the stress of the crisis was fully upon us.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I sincerely regret that this Motion has been made. I was in no sense a party to it, and I had hoped even after the Motion was made that it would not be necessary for me to intervene in the debate. But the House has heard the speech of the Prime Minister, and I think all will feel after the statement that it would be impossible for me to remain silent. I agree with my right hon. friend that it was necessary for people to make up their minds on this question, and I made up my mind; so did my right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, early in this controversy, that protection was not fiscal reform. I think I more than once intimated to the Prime Minister that in my judgment protection was fiscal retrogression. There at once arose a difficult question. Connected as I have been for many years with the Conservative Party and my right hon. friend in my official life, how far was it right for me to remain in the Government if from its head and the majority of the Government I could get no guarantee that they did not look upon protection as fiscal reform? My right hon. friend said that he had a complaint to make against me because I made a certain statement to my constituents.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That was not my complaint.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The complaint was as to the statement I made in connection with a certain document which was not before the public. It was absolutely essential that I should make the statement in the form I did, otherwise my position was perfectly unintelligible, not only to my constituents, but to the public at large. The statement I then made, with due deliberation, in connection with that Cabinet, I will now read in this House—

"On the last day of the session the Cabinet met, and we had before us two documents, a pamphlet entitled 'Insular Free Trade,' and another document containing proposals the Prime Minister wished officially put forward in the name of the Government. Preferential tariffs and taxation of food was included in that programme."

I wrote out that part of my speech with that document before me. I have read that document again during the past few hours, and I adhere to every syllable that I said to my constituents.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am sorry to interrupt my noble friend. Whether that document shall be published or not as he chooses to deal with it is another question. But that is not what I complained of. What I complained of was his allowing Lord Rosebery—that is what I complained of—once, twice, and three times to interpret my noble friend's statement as meaning that I showed two contradictory policies to the Cabinet and asked them to choose which they would like.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: So you did.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I had no idea my right hon. friend studied the papers with such closeness as to be able to know everything that Lord Rosebery said.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: When he says it three times.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I am bound to say I have not read all Lord Rosebery has said on this question.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Oh, shame.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I did read one speech, and I endorse what my right hon. friend said in his denial of the gloss which Lord Rosebery put on my statement. But surely it is rather hard that a Prime Minister, with a host of secretaries and other persons around him, should turn round and attack an ex-colleague because that ex-colleague has not corrected the misinterpretations which have been made by Members of the Opposition in connection with the Prime Minister's own action. I am very sorry to in any way add to the controversial temper of this discussion. I only rose because it was absolutely necessary for me to do so. I made that statement because that document to which I referred pretty clearly indicated to me that my right hon. friend the Prime Minister's views on the fiscal question were such as did not in my judgment sufficiently safeguard the principles of free trade. We discussed that document at the last Cabinet meeting of the session. We discussed it again at the memorable Cabinet on 14th September. I never understood that that document was withdrawn. All of us who were opposed to the suggestions made in that document did believe that it was still under our purview. And here let me incidentally say that my right hon. friend has been entirely misinformed in assuming that there was any cabal inside the Cabinet against him. I never met the Duke of Devonshire or the other members of the Cabinet on this question until after the Cabinet of 14th September, and we then only met because we were all unanimous in our belief that my right hon. friend the senior Member for Birmingham was still remaining a member of the Cabinet, and we were uncertain whether the taxation of food was or was not forming a part of the Government policy. My right hon. friend says that every one of us heard in the Cabinet that the senior Member for Birmingham announced his intention of resigning. I certainly heard no such definite statement, and my memory is pretty tenacious. We all left—we four— under the impression that he was still a member of the Government; and my right hon. friend the Prime Minister cannot forget this fact, that in the letter of resignation which I wrote to him, and in the letter which my right hon. friend the Member for Croydon also wrote, we both believed —it was clear from the purport of both these letters—that my right hon. friend was still a member of the Government and that food taxation in some shape or other was to be proposed. I have never made any complaint of any kind or sort against my right hon. friend the Prime Minister. I admit—I frankly say so—that in my own judgment I had been quite long enough in office. My right hon. friend had only to give me a hint and I should readily have gone. I go further and say that the Prime Minister has a perfect right, if he considers it advisable in the interests of his Party or of his Government, to request any one of his colleagues to place his resignation in his hands, and in my judgment any colleague to whom such an appeal is made is bound to accept such a proposal if made by the Prime Minister. I do not want to exhume the bones of this old controversy which had, I hoped, been buried. My only complaint in connection with this matter is that I was not told the whole facts of the case. I say, not for the purpose of infusing fresh life into the controversy, but I lay down the constitutional principle that if a Prime Minister has the right to get rid of any one of his colleagues, which I think he has, those colleagues, on the other hand, have an equal right, if they are summoned to discuss a question, to be put in full possession of all the facts relating to it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR made an observation which could not be heard in the gallery.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I did not know that my right hon. friend the Member for Birmingham had retired from the Government.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: He had not.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I did not know his resignation was accepted.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It was not.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Quite so. That is just the position in which we left the Cabinet. Now the House can understand the difficulty in which we were placed. Let me go a little further. The Duke of Devonshire, who was acting with us——

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I thought there was no meeting.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I said there was no cabal, and that we did not meet until after the Council; and we then came to the conclusion that it was our duty, all of us, to resign because we could not agree to what we believed to be the policy of the Government. The Duke of Devonshire was told the day after our resignations were sent in something that we did not know, and the

Duke further stated in the House of Lords that which he told me privately, that when he suggested to the Prime Minister that I and my right hon. friend the Member for Croydon, who, like him, were in ignorance of the facts, should be told them, a refusal was made to that request. The Prime Minister said, of course, that we should not have been actuated by any personal influences as regards my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham, and that whether he remained in or outside the Cabinet really did not very much affect our position. But that is a curious view to take of the situation, because it is not the view which my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham took. The position which he took in the letter, which we did not know of until it was published, was that he was so personally associated with a particular part of the policy—that his personality so dominated that policy—that if it were dropped he must leave the Government. All I say is that not one single one of us understood that my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham had made up his mind to leave the Government, nor did we know that he had done so until after the Cabinet Council of 14th September. My right hon. friend says that none of us suggested any compromise in this matter. But it must be remembered that there was a truce going on, and during the time of that truce it was natural—and I think it would have been very unwise of us to have attempted in any way to do anything else—that we should not re-open a question which at any rate at that time was quiescent. My right hon. friend seems to look upon me as a person who is not predisposed to move in any direction, but perhaps he will pardon me for reminding him that I was the pioneer of retaliation under certain conditions, because it was on my own initiative that retaliatory duties against bounty-fed sugar were imposed in India. Now, I hope that after this discussion we shall hear no more of the incidents and circumstances relating to these resignations. It is with the greatest reluctance that I have in any way alluded to them, but, as I have been compelled to speak, I must honestly say that, while I think my right hon. friend was perfectly right in reconstituting his Government, I think it was unfortunate that the procedure adopted was capable of any misunderstanding. I have been for many years in this House. We have fought our battles, and I look back, and I hope I always shall look back, with pleasure to many incidents of my Parliamentary and political life, but I frankly tell my right hon. friend that the one portion of my life which I shall endeavour to obliterate from my memory is that connected with the closing incidents of my official career.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 172; Noes, 237. (Division List No. 44.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Ambrose, Robert
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt E.C(SAndrw'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir Francis H. (Maidstone
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William

Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C.E.H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.)
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Doherty, William
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. John Ellis and Mr. Corrie Grant.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r.
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn J. A. Worc.)
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir John E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants. W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W.
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj Evans-(T'rH'mlets
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John

Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbighs
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N.R
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
Majendie, James A. H.
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H. Dumfriesshire
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir Harry S. (Limehouse
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. Edw. J.
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. G. (Oxf'd Univ.)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tuffnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col Sir C. E. H. (Sheffield
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said he understood that hon. Gentlemen opposite were anxious that the Motion standing in his name should stand over for a fortnight. That was not his understanding; but if hon. Gentlemen were under any misapprehension in the matter he was prepared to postpone the Motion.

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Main Question [7th March], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. PURVIS (Peterborough) said he wished to say a few words on a military matter of general interest. The Secretary of State for War spoke in not very complimentary terms of the Volunteers. But the difficulty of providing proper rifle ranges for the Volunteers rendered them inefficient for the effective defence of the United Kingdom. The Volunteers in his own constituency were an enthusiastic body of men. Many of them went to South Africa, did their duty there and did it well. Six or seven years ago on the introduction of the Lee-Metford rifle the old rifle range was condemned and the Volunteers were compelled to travel many miles from Peterborough to ranges belonging to other corps. The result was that the shooting was not nearly as good as it otherwise would be. The Government now proposed to provide rifles and ammunition without providing ranges for shooting practice. The Volunteers might just as well be without rifles and ammunition as without ranges. The commanding officer in his constituency had been endeavouring without success to secure a rifle range from a local landlord. It was quite true that borough councils and county councils had statutory powers to acquire land in order to let it to local Volunteer forces; but very few instances of such powers being exercised had arisen. In those days they were told at every turn to think Imperially. This was plainly an Imperial question, and if the Volunteers were to be of any use, compulsory means should be taken to acquire ranges for them at the public expense. He hoped his right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War would consider the matter as one of pressing and immediate necessity.

*Mr. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire) said he would like to add a suggestion which he hoped the Secretary of State for War might be able to avail himself of. The hon. Gentleman who had just spoken referred to the difficulty which commanding officers of Volunteer battalions had in obtaining suitable land for rifle ranges. He wished to suggest to the right hon. Gentleman means by which the object aimed at might be obtained under the Allotments Act. The county councils had power to take up land and the question of price was settled by an arbitrator. If power were given to the county councils to take up land on similar conditions for rifle ranges, the difficulty which had to be met would, he thought, disappear. He hoped the Secretary of State would bring in a short Bill giving the county councils power to acquire land by purchase or lease for rifle ranges. The right hon. Gentleman spoke highly of the Yeomanry and complained that the Volunteers had not yet reached their strength. The right hon. Gentleman could attain the end he had in view if he gave the same pay and allowance to the Volunteers when they were on active service as were given to the Yeomanry and Militia. The Volunteers gave up their time to the service of the country, and so far as possible it should be arranged that they should not be out of pocket. He also wished to call attention to the fact that the pay and allowances for adjutants in the Volunteer battalions were invariably less than the pay and allowances given to Yeomanry and Militia adjutants. No officer was more hardly worked than a Volunteer adjutant, and he hoped it would commend itself to the justice of the right hon. Gentleman that the Volunteer adjutant should be given the same pay and allowances as were given to adjutants in other branches of the Auxiliary Forces.. If his suggestions were adopted, he believed that the results would be satisfactory in every way.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said he agreed with his right hon. friend that it would be premature to discuss the question of the Volunteers until the Committee had reported, but he hoped his right hon. friend would do everything he possibly could to expedite the Report as it was very important that it should be issued before the drill season commenced. It was of the utmost importance that the matter should be discussed as soon as possible. With regard to the Mounted Infantry Volunteers which were established in 1900, some fourteen or fifteen corps were now in existence. They were not composed of men who would deprive the Imperial Yeomanry of desirable recruits, because the great majority of them were of an entirely different class from the class that joined the Imperial Yeomanry. It would be a very great pity indeed if the mounted forces of the country were deprived of those corps, but they could not be maintained unless the extra capitation grant and the extra camp allowance were given to them. He hoped his right hon. friend would give his sympathetic attention to this matter as soon as possible, in order that the Volunteer corps would not be shorn of this important arm. He felt sure that his right hon. friend would consider the Report of the Committee generally with the utmost sympathy.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said he thought the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just spoken was under a misapprehension as to the pay given to the Mounted Infantry Volunteers. The Yeomanry were on a totally different footing, as they obtained an allowance for keeping their horses; and it would be quite unfair not to take that into consideration. Altogether he thought that the Volunteers were paid as well as any force in the country. He quite agreed that the Volunteers required a better organisation in the event of war. As regarded the Militia Reserve, he was unable to gather from the right hon. Gentleman whether it was to be composed entirely of Militiamen. He thought it was a very cheap Reserve indeed and that it would be a great pity if it were interfered with. As regards the general question of the extravagance of the whole Army, a year or two ago the country was in the full blaze of a warlike fever and the House appeared anxious to do everything it could to raise the efficiency of the Army at any cost. Two years ago he urged that unless economy went hand in hand with increased efficiency there would be a dangerous reaction, because the country would begin to think what an expensive machine it was providing and what a waste there was in the operation. His words had been practically borne out by the facts. The country now was all for economy, and the expenditure had grown to such enormous proportions that many Members who were extremely anxious for the efficiency of the Army, felt obliged to consent to considerable economies in many Departments. The Estimates themselves, however, showed no sign of economy. There was a nominal reduction, but there was no evidence of an attempt to reduce the expense of unnecessary portions of the organisation. The War Office Committee had neglected financial considerations, and the Government had made no definite statement with regard to economy in the future. That was a serious state of things for the country. Business had been crippled by the enormous expenditure, and it was necessary for the Government to retrench somewhere. They could not retrench on the Navy, and it would be difficult to effect any considerable retrenchment on the Civil Service; there remained only the Army, and the House was anxious to know what was going to be done in that direction. The fact that the present Estimates were mere temporary Votes placed the House in a most difficult position, as it rendered it practically impossible to deal with any definite point without the reply being given that the money was to be devoted not to the purpose appearing on the Paper, but to some other purpose not yet decided upon. A careful study of the Report of the Reconstruction Committee gave but a vague idea of what was to be substituted for the present system. With many paragraphs in the Report he entirely agreed. He was glad the Army Corps system had been condemned, and that the system of territorial brigades was to be substituted for territorial regiments. He hoped, however, the Government would not forget to introduce Mounted Infantry for every brigade to be trained regularly at home. The number of generals might be decreased by doing away with some of the general officers and employing colonels as brigadiers. It was necessary that economy should be effected somewhere, as the present expenditure was a danger to the country, and the injury to trade through want of capital was a greater evil than would be suffered by a large reduction in the Army. He hoped that everything possible would be done to reduce the expenditure, and that even at the eleventh hour the Government would intimate their readiness to accept reductions in the Estimates which had been put forward.

MR. GUEST (Plymouth) expressed his disappointment at the statement of the Secretary of State for War. Throughout the right hon. Gentleman's speech there ran an apologetic tone, and one could not help wondering where was the ardent Army reformer of two or three years back. The right hon. Gentleman had given the House to understand that the statement was not such as he would have liked to make had he been in a position to deal freely with the subject, that the Estimates were merely of a temporary or interim character, that they represented neither his hopes nor his aspirations, and that they were put forward as embodying a stage which was in all probability transitional. He had further laid down the obvious proposition that it was the function of the heads of the Army to place in the forefront of their calculations the duties the Army would be called upon to perform in time of peace or in time of war, but he had failed altogether to indicate what was his idea of those duties, of the manner in which the Army should be distributed, or of the proportions the different arms should bear one to another, and the whole of his subsequent remarks were vitiated by that omission. The reduction in the number of men, for instance, was not the result of any thought-out plan or of any estimate of the number required at home and abroad, but simply the automatic reduction resulting from inability to secure the number of recruits desired. The Secretary of State had contented himself by claiming credit for a reduction of £280,000 on the normal expenditure, though no explanation was given of how a "normal" figure had been arrived at. But that reduction represented about 1 per cent. on the Estimates and could not be regarded as forming part of a definite and settled policy of retrenchment. It had certainly been hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would have shown more practical sympathy with the desire for economy. Another respect in which the statement was unsatisfactory was with regard to the question of recruiting. According to the right hon. Gentleman's memorandum, recruiting last year was not satisfactory, in spite of the fact that the emoluments of the private soldier were 60 or 70 per cent. greater than in 1897. Were the 40,000 men recruited last year sufficient to fill up the battalions provided for on the Estimates? The late Secretary of State for India had stated that a much larger number than 40,000 would be necessary to complete his scheme.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER pointed out that recruiting had been closed to two important branches of the service—the Artillery, and the Cavalry—and that had greatly affected the total.

Mr. GUEST said the right hon. Gentleman had also stated that the closing of the recruiting for the Artillery and the Cavalry had had a beneficial effect on recruiting for the Infantry and the Guards. Last year provision was made for a number of men which it was impossible to obtain under existing conditions, and the House was entitled to expect from the right hon. Gentleman a reasoned statement showing that the number of battalions for which provision was now being made, could be satisfactorily filled by the normal recruiting to be expected.

And, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed tomorrow.

NEW BILL.

NURSES AND PRIVATE NURSING HOMES (REGISTRATION).

Bill to provide for the better Training and Registration of Nurses and for the voluntary Registration of Private Nursing Homes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Bignold, Mr. H. D. Green, Captain Bagot, Lord Cecil Manners, and Mr. Malcolm.

NURSES AND PRIVATE NURSING HOMES (REGISTRATION) BILL.

"To provide for the better Training and Registration of Nurses and for the voluntary Registration of Private Nursing Homes," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 114.]

Adjourned at three minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 8th March, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Yarmouth Corporation Bill [H.L.]; King's College Hospital Bill [H.L.]. Reports from His Majesty's Attorney-General received, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Young and Bell's Patents Bill [H.L.]; London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill [H.L.]; Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [H.L.]; Govan Burgh (Electricity) Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Manchester Corporation (General Powers) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a} (according to Order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill. Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EMIGRATION.

Report on the Emigrants' Information Office, for the year ended 31st December, 1903.

CANADA.

Resolution of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Quebec on Irish Affairs, with the reply thereto.

CROWN AGENTS FOR THE COLONIES.

Despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies relating to the commercial business of the Crown Agents for the Colonies.

INDIA (COTTON).

Improvement in Indian cotton.

COAL SUPPLIES (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Second Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of the coal resources of the United Kingdom:—Vol. I.—The Report; Vol. II.—Minutes of evidence and appendices; Vol. III.—Supplement. Plans and diagrams.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie upon the Table.

MILITARY MANŒUVRES, 1904.

Draft Order in Council relative to military manœuvres, 1904.

JAMAICA.

Rules and regulations for the administration of the prisons in Jamaica.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894–1903.

Order No. 6808, dated the 3rd day of March, 1904, revoking Order No. 6794, defining a foreign animals quarantine station at Southampton.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 3rd March, 1904, granting a retired allowance to William Matthews, 1st Class Clerk, Controller's Office, London Postal Service, under Section 2 of the Superannuation Act, 1887.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877.

Statute made by the Governing Body of All Souls College, Oxford, on the 21st November, 1903, amending Statute 12A, Clause 2, of the Statutes of the college. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 23.)

NEW BILLS.

SHOPS BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the law relating to shops. Was presented by the Earl Beauchamp; read 1^{a}; and to be printed. (No. 24.)

IRISH LAND BILL [H.L.].

A Bill further to amend the law relating to the occupation and ownership of land in Ireland. Was presented by the Lord Muskerry; read 1^{a}; and to be printed. (No. 25.)

BISHOPRIC OF BRISTOL BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF BRISTOL: My Lords, the object of this Bill is to enable the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to lay before His Majesty in Council, for confirmation, a scheme (*a*) for re-arranging the boundaries between the dioceses of the bishoprics of Bristol and Gloucester by transferring to the diocese of Bristol the ecclesiastical parishes contained in the rural deanery of Hawkesbury, and also the ecclesiastical parishes of Thornbury and Oldbury-upon-Severn, both in the rural deanery of Dursley, and for including the parishes aforesaid in the rural deanery of Hawkesbury; and (*b*) for re-arranging the boundaries between the dioceses of the bishoprics of Bristol and Bath and Wells by transferring to the diocese of Bristol the ecclesiastical parish of Brislington in the rural deanery of Bath (Keynsham District), and including it in the rural deanery of Bedminster. The Bill as I now move it is the same as the one which was passed through your Lordships' House last year by the most rev. Primate; but in the course of the winter representations were made to me which will induce me to move two Amendments when the Bill gets into Committee.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Lord Bishop of Bristol.*)

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

SITE FOR DUKE OF YORK'S SCHOOL BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Lord WINDSOR): My Lords, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, I should like to explain to the House that a year ago it was decided, after very careful consideration, that in order to bring the Duke of York's School up to the requirements of a modern school, it was advisable that it should be removed from its present site and taken into the country. A good deal of care was taken to examine and survey the several sites available, and a site near Dover was selected as possessing considerable advantages over the others. But in order to enable the school to be built upon this land it is necessary to abolish certain rights of way, the existence of which will prevent the site being utilised to the best advantage; and it is for that object that this Bill has been introduced.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*Lord Windsor.*)

On Question, Bill read 2^a.

NAVAL RESERVES.

LORD BRASSEY rose to call attention to the Naval Reserves. He said: My Lords, in introducing to your Lordships, not for the first time, the subject of our Reserves for manning the Navy, my main object is to provide an opportunity for a statement by the First Lord of the Admiralty on the progress lately made in the enrolment and training of the new Reserves, both home and colonial, which it is desired to raise. I will not dwell on financial considerations. The Navy Estimates have reached an amount hitherto unprecedented. The increase in the Shipbuilding Votes has not been more than sufficient to keep pace with the expenditure for other Navies, more especially those of Russia and Germany. The Votes for manning show a large excess. Voluntary service is necessarily costly, but our numbers largely exceed those of foreign navies. Our Estimates for 1904–5 provide for 131,000 men for Fleet service, and 55,000 in the Reserves, as against the 52,000 permanent men in the French navy, with an estimated strength of 50,000 effectives in the Reserves. There is only one way by which the cost of manning can be reduced—and that is by increasing and making more efficient our Naval Reserves. With 100,000 men in the permanent force, and 100,000 well trained men in reserve, we should have great powers of expansion, while our expenditure would be less than at present.

It is due to the Admiralty to say that they have not neglected the Reserves. They have reorganised the Fleet Reserve with, as I believe, highly satisfactory results. The enrolment of a Colonial Naval Reserve has been commenced. In the maritime provinces of Canada, in Newfoundland. and even in Australia we have the means of recruiting to any strength which may be required. A statement by the First Lord as to the progress in creating this new important branch of the Reserve will be received with interest. It is satisfactory to know that the Naval Volunteer Reserve is being re-established. I was in close touch with the force when first enrolled by the Admiralty under Lord Goschen. I can testify to the zeal and intelligence of the men, more particularly in gunnery All the reports of inspecting officers were favourable, but in the original organisation a mistake was made. They were classed too closely with the pure bluejacket; but that mistake, I feel sure, will not be repeated. I congratulate the Admiralty on the hearty response which has been made to the call for volunteers.

I turn to other resources for recruiting, as yet untried. In the great war, several regiments were embarked in the Fleet and did gallant service. It would seem that something should now be done on the old lines, and I would suggest that certain regiments might be permanently quartered at the naval ports, and trained as Marines. We should then have, at a comparatively small additional cost, a force efficient for service afloat or ashore. The reserve of stokers is the main difficulty, and the classes which give us volunteers for gunnery duties cannot supply us with stokers. It is difficult to recruit from the mercantile marine. The stokers of our mercantile marine are always good at their work, but sometimes impatient of discipline, and the conclusion seems to be that the Admiralty must rely mainly on men trained in the service. I offer to the Admiralty a suggestion. Make the dockyard labourers a reserve of stokers. Give every man a training in the stokehold before he is taken into employment in the dockyard. When qualified as a Reservist the stoker would receive dockyard pay as a labourer, and naval pay as a Reservist. If the plan should be found practicable, it would place at the disposal of the Admiralty, in an emergency, a large force.

One more suggestion. All steamers passing through the Suez Canal are manned with stokers of the tropical races. In his evidence before the Committee on Manning, Mr. Anderson, Chairman of the Orient Line and of the London Chamber of Shipping, recommended that a reserve of stokers should be enrolled in the ports of Bombay and Calcutta. The idea seems well worthy of consideration. In conclusion, I submit that the time must shortly come when the additions to the permanent force of the Navy can no longer continue on the scale of recent years. We have added 45,000 men to the *personnel* in ten years, and it is quite evident that for further expansion we must look more to our Reserves.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (The Earl of SELBORNE): My Lords, my noble friend is a well known authority upon this as upon all naval matters; but I do not think that he laid quite sufficient stress on what are really the governing factors in this very difficult problem of manning the Navy—factors which differentiate our problem from the same problem in other countries. In the first place there is the enormous fact that we have to go to the open market for the men of the Fleet, whereas France, Germany, and Russia take their men under a system of universal conscription. My noble friend quoted certain numbers in respect of the French navy but that gives a wholly inadequate idea of the situation. The French Admiralty can fall back on the whole maritime population of France, and after that on the inland population. Therefore, both as to numbers and cost of *personnel*, our case is very different from that of other naval Powers. What really governs the numbers in the Fleet are the number of ships that the public service of this country requires to be kept in commission in time of peace. In this country you might have a most efficient Reserve on the largest scale, not one man belonging to which is available for the Admiralty in time of peace; and yet in time of peace we are obliged to keep a large Fleet in commission, much larger than any other country, and it must be exclusively manned by men in the permanent naval service. These two factors are of cardinal importance in considering this question. I am, however, in cordial agreement with the general principles laid down by my noble friend. It is clear that there must be a limit to the number of men in the permanent naval force, and we ought to look to the Reserve for the development which we should require in time of war.

What has been the history of the Naval Reserve? The most important step was the creation of the Royal Naval Reserve about half a century ago. The second important step, and one which I think is likely to bear even greater fruit in the future than the first step, was taken by Lord Goschen when he established the Royal Fleet Reserve. The Royal Fleet Reserve is a reserve of men who have been in the Navy, and who have left it either owing to expiring engagements or purchase, or to invaliding and subsequent recovery. It is to that force we look in future for the solution of many of our difficulties. In passing I would allude to that branch of the Royal Naval Reserve, which was also started by Lord Goschen—the colonial branch. He started, as your Lordships will remember, a branch consisting of the fishermen of Newfoundland, which is flourishing. The numbers which are given in the Estimates are roughly 400. We are endeavouring to establish branches in New Zealand and Australia, but it is too soon to make any statement as to the success of that movement. I can only say that it has the entire goodwill of the colonial Parliaments. The scheme was adopted, not only by the Parliament of the Commonwealth, but by that of New Zealand.

To return to the general question. The next important step was the appointment of a Committee presided over by Sir Edward Grey. The Board of Admiralty had very clear objects in view when they appointed that Committee. In the first place they wanted certain branches of the question to be worked out for themselves; but especially to have the subject investigated by a Committee that would command the entire confidence of the country irrespective of Party, and the presentation of a Report which could be laid before Parliament and be accepted as the standard for future Parliaments as to the future requirements of this country in respect of manning. That Committee included naval officers as distinguished as Admiral Sir Edward Seymour, Admiral (then Captain) Lambton, and Admiral Henderson. The Treasury was represented by Sir Francis Mowatt, and there were distinguished representatives of the mercantile marine like Sir Alfred Jones, with Sir Edward Grey in the chair. Though that Committee was appointed by the Board of Admiralty I am entitled to say that a stronger or more qualified Committee has never sat on a subject of the same kind. Its Report is before the country. As far as I am aware no Member of either House of Parliament nor anyone in authority outside has disputed the conclusions and recommendations of that Committee. It was wholly adopted by the Board of Admiralty, and it is on the principles laid down by that Committee that we are working and intend to work.

Your Lordships will see what an important development of the Royal Fleet Reserve that Committee has opened up, because that Committee recommended under certain limitations that the old system of non-continuous service should be re-introduced in the Navy. They thought, and the Board agree, that short service in the Navy on the principles adopted in the Army can never obtain and never ought to obtain. The great backbone of the naval service must be non-continuous service, but we think that there was room for a strong infusion of non-continuous service men. The numbers recommended by the Committee were adopted by Parliament last year, and voted by the House of Commons this year; and the progress in the Reserve is, I think, satisfactory and encouraging. The Fleet Reserve now numbers 8,500 men, of which 2,500 are Marines, and 6,000 roughly seamen and stokers. The Royal Naval Reserve, which was dwindling for some years, has now begun to increase, and it now numbers nearly 27,000 men. The Volunteer Reserve, which was only inaugurated twelve months ago, is 2,000 men; so that I think I may say that in three years the Naval Reserves have risen from 25,000 to 37,000 men. It is a very important addition.

The new force of Naval Volunteer Reserve differs from the old force in a marked way. The new force never could have been created unless those joining it had been willing to observe the conditions which the Board of Admiralty thought essential. The old force was not called upon to serve outside territorial waters. It was a coastal body, and, as such, its use in war was obviously strictly limited. We laid down two conditions as regards the new Naval Volunteer Reserve—first, when called out in war they must be prepared to serve in any part of the world to which the ship to which they were posted was ordered by the Admiralty; and, second, they must be prepared to do any work on board ship to which the captain chose to put them. Those two conditions have been cheerfully accepted by the men, and I have no hesitation in saying that they will be really valuable additions to our Naval Reserve. A suggestion has been made by my noble friend as to a proportion of the Army being trained for the use of the Navy in time of war. In naval history regiments have been embarked and have done excellent service in the Fleet, and I have no doubt that if the occasion arose the same service would be forthcoming. But if certain regiments were put down permanently as a naval force and trained for use on board ship it would not be an unreasonable act on the part of the Secretary for War to propose to transfer the charge of these men to the Naval Votes. I do not think that you can have a system of divided allegiance of that kind. The men must be soldiers, and their allegiance must be to the military service, though in time of stress they may be able to serve the Navy, just as the Navy has so many times helped the Army on shore. The training of dockyard labourers as stokers for the use of the Fleet in war was one of the points considered by Sir E. Grey's Committee; but it was rejected for reasons which I think will be convincing to your Lordships. In time of war dockyard labourers would be as much required by the Navy as the stokers.

Lord BRASSEY: They could easily be replaced.

***The Earl of SELBORNE**: The man who is accustomed to work in the dockyard is a very different man from the man brought in on occasion from outside; and I should certainly not propose to deprive the dockyards in the moment of their greatest emergency of men accustomed to work in them more than can be helped. As regards the use of the tropical races in the stokehold, there are occasions and stations for their use. At present such men are used in the stokehold of some ships in the Persian Gulf, and I think in similar cases and conditions the use of these men may be extended. The Board are engaged in investigating the subject.

Lord MUSKERRY: My Lords, it is clear that if we had a war the first step would be to call out all the Reserves to man the ships. Then, when casualties occurred, we should have to fall back upon the merchant service to fill the vacancies; and in this connection I would call your Lordships' attention to the serious neglect which has been shown in not encouraging British seamen in our merchant service capable of filling the ranks according to naval requirements. There is a scheme—I do not know whether it has come into operation yet—under which foreign seamen are to be naturalised on payment of 5s. Of course, some of these "crown" subjects, if I may so call them, may prove very useful men, especially the Swedes and Norwegians; but, on the other hand, some will be very indifferent indeed. I would suggest to the Admiralty that they should consider the question of the establishment of training ships, which we lack very badly, and which, I am sure, would attract a better class of men into the merchant service and lead to the formation of a very much more effective Reserve than these "crown" subjects.

House adjourned at Five o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 8th March, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Blyth and Cowpen Gas Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Hampton-in-Arden Gas Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Amersham, Beaconsfield, and District Water Bill (by Order). Second Reading deferred till Tuesday, 22nd March (Evening Sitting).

Clyde Navigation (Shieldhall Dock) Bill (by Order). Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee;

1. "That, in the case of the Middlesborough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thornaby Tramways, Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct so much of Tramways Nos. 1, 2, 2A, as is outside the Urban District of Eston, be struck out of the Bill, unless the necessary consents of the local and road authorities to Tramways Nos. 1, 2, 2A, be proved before the Committee on the Bill, and provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 4 and 5, and so much of Tramway No. 3 as is outside the borough of Thornaby-on-Tees, be struck out of the Bill. That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

2. "That, in the case of the Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill, Standing Order 67 ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that all the townlands in the parish of Convoy be omitted from the Schedule to the Bill. That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

3. "That, in the case of the Leyton Urban District Council, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of the Dairymen, etc., within the Urban District of Leyton, against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

4. "That, in the case of the Acton Improvement Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of the Dairymen, etc., within the Urban District of Acton, against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

5. "That, in the case of the St. Marylebone Electric Lighting Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Gas Light and Coke Company, against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought not to be dispensed with."

First Four Resolutions agreed to.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill. Report [this day] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill to be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP D).

Mr. CREMER reported from the Committee on Group D of Private Bills; That, at the meeting of the Committee this day, a letter was received from Colonel Welby, Chairman of the said Committee, stating that he was unable, on account of illness, to attend the Committee this day.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING (LONDON) BILL.

Petition from Battersea, against (praying to be heard by counsel); to lie upon the Table.

LICENCE HOLDERS.

Petition from Carlisle, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law: from New Houghton; Haggerston; Ulverstone; Dorking (two); Plymouth; Baildon; Shipley; Wibsey; East Berwickshire; Aberavon; Heathfield; Eakring; Warrington; Crewkerne; Walthamstow; Bideford; Leiston; Saxmundham; Staines; St. Albans; Walworth; Sutton in Ashfield; Kemnay; Oxford; Cumberland; Peasley Cross; Haddenham; Dublin; and Middleton in Teesdale; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOUR ORDINANCE).

Petition from Old Headington, for withdrawal; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TREASURY CHEST.

Account presented, for the year 1902–3, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 87.]

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 3rd March, 1904, granting to William Matthews, 1st Class Clerk, Controller's Office, a Retired Allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY (VICTUALLING YARD MANUFACTURING ACCOUNTS, 1902–3).

Annual Accounts presented, of the Cost of Manufacturing, Provisions, Victualling Stores, etc., at the Home Victualling Yards and Malta Yard for 1902–3, etc., with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 88.]

CANADA.

Copy presented, of Resolution of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Quebec on Irish Affairs, with the reply thereto [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EMIGRATION (COLONIES).

Copy presented, of Report on the Emigrants' Information Office for the year ended 31st December, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CROWN AGENTS FOR THE COLONIES.

Copy presented, of Despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies relating to the Commercial Business of the Crown Agents for the Colonies [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

JAMAICA.

Copy presented, of Rules and Regulations for the Administration of the Prisons in Jamaica [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).

Copy presented, of Statute made by the Governing Body of All Souls College, Oxford, on 21st November, 1903, amending Statute 12^{a}, Clause 2, of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 89.]

COAL SUPPLIES (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Copy presented, of Second Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of the Coal Resources of the United Kingdom. Vol. I., Report. Vol. II., Minutes of Evidence and Appendices. Vol. III., Supplement. Plans and Diagrams [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

INEBRIATES' ACTS (INSPECTOR'S REPORT) (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of First Report of the Inspector for Scotland, under the Inebriates' Acts, for the period to 31st December, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Church Temporalities (Ireland). Copy of the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General upon the account of the Irish Land Commission in respect of Church Temporalities in Ireland for the year ended 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 90.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Pharmacy Act—Suggested Amendment.

MR. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will consider the advisability of adopting for Great Britain a measure similar to the Ordinance lately promulgated for the Orange River Colony, which prohibits a firm, co-partnership, or company, carrying on the business of a pharmaceutical chemist in the dispensing of medicines or the compounding of poisons unless the directors are qualified persons.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) The subject is under consideration in connection with a Bill for the amendment of the Pharmacy Act which is in preparation.

Promotion in the Dublin Excise Service.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if his attention has been drawn to the fact that, of the sixty-three first class officers of Inland Revenue on the Dublin collection, sixty-one can never receive any increase in salary under the present organisation of the Excise Service; and, if so, whether, in the interest of the public service, he proposes to take any, and if so, what steps in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The figures given in the Question are approximately correct. But the proportion of officers in Dublin, or in any other centre who have passed the point at which they can look for further promotion, is no indication of the general prospects of promotion throughout the service as a whole. These general prospects are very much better than the Dublin figures would suggest, and it is not considered that the present organisation of the Excise Service calls for any material modification.

Supplementary Estimates 1880–1904.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state what were the total amounts of the Supplementary Estimates in each year from 1880 to 1904.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*)

Year.	Army.	Navy.	Civil.	Total.
	£	£	£	£
1880–1881 . . .	946,000	210,000	619,633	1,775,633
1881–1882 . . .	615,000	220,000	1,070,149	1,905,149
1882–1883 . . .	3,528,000	350,000	1,455,377	5,333,377
1883–1884 . . .	870,900	147,200	1,021,617	2,039,717
1884–1885 . . .	3,209,500	756,200	656,197	4,621,897
1885–1886 . . .	8,000,100	3,308,400	364,692	11,673,192
1886–1887 . . .	459,000	277,000	551,653	1,287,653
1887–1888 . . .	—	—	529,965	529,965
1888–1889 . . .	—	45,000	356,117	401,117
1889–1890 . . .	71,700	350,000	386,041	807,741
1890–1891 . . .	180,100	350,000	1,294,843	1,824,943
1891–1892 . . .	—	—	1,704,554	1,704,554
1892–1893 . . .	15,000	—	1,066,560	1,081,560
1893–1894 . . .	195,100	—	397,227	592,327
1894–1895 . . .	100	200,000	455,189	655,289
1895–1896 . . .	671,400	1,100,000	746,789	2,518,189
1896–1897 . . .	400,400	507,000	1,366,049	2,273,449
1897–1898 . . .	1,490,000	500,000	1,978,039	3,968,039
1898–1899 . . .	885,100	350,000	751,132	1,986,232
1899–1900 . . .	23,047,000	—	668,336	23,715,336
1900–1901 . . .	30,500,100	2,519,300	1,315,886	34,335,286
1901–1902 . . .	5,000,000	200,000	7,331,151	12,531,151
1902–1903 . . .	100	—	10,021,603	10,021,703
1903–1904 . . .	2,700,000	1,270,000	640,693	4,610,693

German Inquiry into Kartells.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any information has been received as to the proceedings of the German Government Commission of Inquiry on Kartells of later date than that presented on pages

333–342 of the Blue-book on British and Foreign Trade, etc. (Cd. 1761); has information been received of any findings arrived at or recommendations made by that Commission; and, if so, has information been received of any administrative or legislative action taken or to be taken in consequence of such recommendations.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) Since the sittings of the Commission referred to in the Blue-book, there have been other meetings dealing with the paper trade, the pig-iron industry, and the half-finished steel (billets etc.) trade. The proceedings at these meetings have been reported in the *Reichsanzeiger*. No information has been received of any findings arrived at or recommendations made by the Commission; or of any administrative or legislative action taken in connection with the proceedings of the Commission.

Foreign Criticisms of British Trade Methods.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will present to the House a Memorandum in reference to the various Diplomatic and Consular Reports issued by the Government since the beginning of 1899, dealing with the question of foreign trade competition, in which criticisms are made on the methods of British merchants and manufacturers in meeting that competition, similar to the Memorandum (C. 9078) presented in 1898.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) Steps are taken by the Board of Trade through their weekly Journal and otherwise to bring promptly to the notice of British traders such extracts from Diplomatic and Consular Reports bearing on British trade methods as seem likely to be of value for their information and guidance. I consider that this course is preferable to the publication of a general Return compiled in the way suggested, which, while of little specific value to traders with a particular market, is not altogether free from objections for reasons which I have given to the hon. Member.

Introduction of Government Valuation Bill.

MR. LUKE WHITE (Yorkshire, E.R., Buckrose): To ask the President of the Local Government Board when he proposes to introduce the Bill for the amendment of the Law with respect to valuation authorities and the preparation of valuation lists.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am unable at present to fix a day, but I hope to be able to introduce the Bill at an early date.

Sunday Debating Societies on Licensed Premises.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to a refusal of the Newington licensing magistrates of a licence to the proprietor of The Royal Standard, Royal Road, West Newington, unless he discontinued the debating society held in his club-room on Sunday evenings; and, if so, will he introduce a clause in the forthcoming Licensing Bill to deal with such cases.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) I have no information as to the facts of this case, nor am I prepared to make any statement with regard to the Licensing Bill.

Imprisonment of a Child.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of Gertrude Philbrick, a child aged thirteen, who pleaded guilty to stealing 3*d.* from the pocket of a fellow schoolgirl, and was sentenced by the Colchester magistrates on 27th February to fourteen days imprisonment in the second division; and, if so, will he state what action he intends to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) I have already had this case before me, and have caused inquiry to be made. In view of all the circumstances that have been brought to my notice, including the fact that the girl had been previously convicted of larceny, I have not felt justified in advising any interference with the sentence; but I am now in communication with the magistrates as to the best way of dealing with such cases.

London County Council Education Committee.

Mr. WHITMORE (Chelsea): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he can state what memorials, proceeding from what bodies and individuals, have been presented to the Board of Education, urging that the scheme of the London County Council for its future education committee should be modified so as to provide for the co-option to it of persons of experience in education.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) Memorials have been received by the Board from the following:—Central Governing Body of the City Parochial Foundation; †Women's Industrial Council; Church School Union, Barnes; Mayfair Curzon Schools; Rev. J. J. Coxhead; Southwark Roman Catholic Diocesan Association; Westminster, etc. Schools Association (Roman Catholic); Miss Helen Conybeare and eight other educationists; Chelsea Borough; University of London; †London Progressive Education Council; 45 Prominent Educationists; Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools; Incorporated Association of Head Masters; †Women's Liberal Metropolitan Union; Kensington Borough; B. J. Smythe, Esq.; City of Westminster; F. Pritchard, Esq.; City of London; Wandsworth Borough; City and Guilds of London Institute.

Children attending Schools outside their Residential Districts.

Mr. MORRELL (Oxfordshire, Woodstock): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether any instructions have been issued bearing on Article 78 of the Provisional Code of 1903 under which a child may be refused admission to a public elementary school on other than reasonable grounds; whether the intervention of a county boundary between the residence of a child and the nearest school available for that child is a reasonable ground for refusal to admit such child to a public elementary school in an adjoining county; and, whether, if in such a public elementary school, on the annual grant list, and free, there is an unoccupied place, one local authority may charge another a fee for the external child coming in to the school over the county boundary.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) In answer to the first paragraph no instructions have been issued on the subject. In answer to the second paragraph, the fact that a county boundary intervened between the residence of a child and the nearest available school would not in itself be held to constitute a reasonable ground for refusing to admit such child under Article 78; but each case would be considered on its merits. In reply to the third paragraph, if the school was one not entitled to charge fees, the local authority would have no power to charge a fee in respect of a child residing outside its area, but in cases where outside children attended in such numbers as to throw an appreciable charge on the funds of the school-owning authority, the Board of Education would support that authority in refusing admission unless the local authority of the area within which the children resided was prepared to enter into an agreement with the school-owning authority under Section 52 of the Elementary Education Act, 1870, to contribute towards the expense of maintaining the school.

False Statements (Companies) Bill and Registered Friendly Societies.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): To ask Mr. Attorney General whether he will say if the definition of a company, in Sub-section (2) of Section 1 of the False Statements (Companies) Bill, includes a registered friendly society.

(*Answered by Sir Robert Finlay.*) Yes.

Sale of Trinity College Estates.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has been able during the recess to devise any scheme enabling the tenants on properties where Trinity College is the head landlord to purchase their holdings; and if the suggestion of a Commission to inquire into the legal difficulties now meets with his approval.

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†These ask for the co-option of a larger number of women.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I think it would be desirable to appoint a Commission. The terms of reference are under consideration.

Expenditure under the Parish Committee Scheme in Kerry.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how much money has been spent under the parish committee scheme in Kerry since its establishment; how many parishes have applied to take part in it; and how many have actually received grants or are working the scheme.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The scheme was established in two parishes in Kerry last year, namely, Killorglin and Glenbeigh jointly with Glencar. The expenditure amounts to £273. Applications have been received from ten parishes. The nature of the scheme has been reconsidered, and fresh instructions are being prepared to put it in operation this year in eleven parishes. Two parishes have received grants.

Fermanagh Agricultural and Technical Instruction Committee—Religious Persuasion of Staff.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.) To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the names, salaries, and religious persuasion of all lecturers, demonstrators, and instructresses at present holding office under the Fermanagh Committee of Agriculture and Technical Instruction.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The names and salaries of officials employed by the Fermanagh County Council in carrying out the provisions of the Agriculture and Technical Instruction Act will be found in the Return recently laid on the Table to the Order of the hon. Member for West Cavan (No. 21 of 1904). The Department has no information in respect of the religious persuasion of these officials.

Dublin Registry Office and Records of Births.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that several applications have been made to the General Registry Office, Dublin, for certificates of birth, and that the applicants were informed that the entry could not be traced; and, if so, can he explain the cause.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Applications for certificates may be unsuccessful on one of two grounds—the insufficiency of the information given, or the non-registration of the birth. The cases of unsuccessful search are comparatively few.

Chinese Labour in the Transvaal.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what steps he proposes to take to ensure that the importation of Chinese indentured labour into the Transvaal shall be a temporary expedient.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The extent to which the importation of Chinese may prove to be temporary will depend mainly upon the development of sources of labour supply in South Africa, an object which every effort will be made to attain.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Army Council—Salaries of Members.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War on what grounds have the salaries of the members of the Army Council been fixed at a higher rate than those given to the Sea Lords of the Admiralty Board.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): The hon. Member is mistaken. The total emoluments of the military members of the Army Council are less than those of the First Naval Lord and the additional Naval Lord (the Controller of the Navy), but more than those of the Second and Junior Naval Lord. I think it is desirable to give the same consolidated salary to all the military members of the Army Council.

MR. BUCHANAN: Do not the four Military Lords draw a much higher salary than the four Naval Lords?

[No answer was returned.]

Committee of Imperial Defence—Staff Charges.

MR. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the charge for the staff of the Committee of Imperial Defence, for which money is asked for the first time in the Army Estimates, is to be borne for the future by Army funds, or will it be shared by other Departments that have representation on the Committee.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: The provision made in Army Estimates 1904-5 is for the extra staff who have been temporarily employed in the War Office on work connected with the Committee of Imperial defence. The question of the provision for the "permanent nucleus" of this Committee has not yet been settled.

Transvaal Labour Ordinance—Recruiting Regulations.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether in view of the fact that Chinese labourers recruited for the Transvaal mines are to be taken to Hong-Kong, where the terms of their contract are to be officially explained to them for the first time, he will secure that those labourers who then decide not to accept the terms of the contract shall be sent back to their homes at the expense of the persons who have enlisted them: and whether he will secure also that this alternative shall be fully explained to each labourer by the official representing the Government.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): It is proposed that the recruiter's licence shall make it obligatory on him to explain to the labourer, before he leaves his district, the full terms and conditions of the contract.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: Am I not correct in saying that for the first time these conditions will be explained officially when the labourers are brought to Hong-Kong?

MR. LYTTELTON: It depends on the exact meaning which the hon. Member attaches to the word "official."

Chinese Labour in Rhodesia.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any Ordinance permitting the introduction of Chinese labourers into Rhodesia has been sanctioned; and, if not, whether Parliament will be given an opportunity of discussing any such Ordinance before it is sanctioned.

MR. LYTTELTON: Under the Southern Rhodesia Ordinances No. 18 of 1901 and No. 3 of 1902 labourers from China can be introduced into Rhodesia with the sanction of the Secretary of State. That sanction has not as yet been given. The latter part of the Question should be addressed to the Prime Minister.

MR. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): Will the right hon. Gentleman, before he gives his consent, lay the whole Papers on the Table, so that the House may consider them.

MR. LYTTELTON: That Question is involved in the one which I have asked to be put to the First Lord.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): Has the assent of the Crown been refused?

MR. LYTTELTON: I do not say that. It has not yet been given.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Has it been asked for? Has it been refused?

[No answer was returned.]

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL then asked if he might have an Answer from the First Lord.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): It seems to me that the Answer is a simple one. I do not understand that any question of principle is raised by the introduction of Asiatic labour into Rhodesia which is not raised in connection with the same policy in the Transvaal. I do not, therefore, think a separate discussion on Rhodesia as distinguished from the Transvaal, is either necessary or desirable.

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs): Will any Papers with regard to the case of Rhodesia be laid before Parliament?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall be very glad to consult with my right hon. friend the head of the Department. Obviously I could not answer the Question off-hand.

Bombay—Railway Communication with Karachi.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what progress has been made with the scheme for joining Bombay with Karachi by railway communication through Cutch; and when the work is likely to be completed.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): A scheme for a railway, sixty-one miles in length, from Hyderabad in Sind to Badin, which, if continued, would form part of a through communication between Bombay and Karachi, was sanctioned in May, 1903, and progress is being made with its construction. Beyond surveys, no further steps have been taken for completing the through line of communication, and I am unable to say when the work is likely to be undertaken.

Board of Agriculture—District Correspondents.

MR. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock); I beg to ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the Board of Agriculture, if agricultural correspondents have been appointed for all districts in the country; and, if so, whether the reports from such correspondents will be published for the information of Members.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): Honorary Agricultural correspondents have now been selected for each of the counties of England and Scotland, and steps are being taken to give publicity to the appointments in the local Press and by means of notices to be exhibited at the post offices. The correspondents will not be asked to furnish regular reports at stated intervals and their communications will be of an informal and occasionally of a confidential character. Any information which may be of general interest will be published in the Journal of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, which will hereafter be published monthly instead of quarterly, a copy of which, and our leaflets will be supplied to each correspondent. The instructions to correspondents, together with a complete list of those who have consented to act, will shortly be laid before Parliament.

Royal Commission on Tuberculosis.

MR. BATTY LANGLEY (Sheffield, Attercliffe): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state when the Report of the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis will be available for Members.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): I understand that considerable progress has been made by the Royal Commission with their investigation, but that the necessity for making the Report as far as possible conclusive involves a very wide series of experiments. These experiments are being carried out on an extensive scale by the Commission, and I am informed that it is impossible to state at present when the Report will be issued.

MR. BATTY LANGLEY: Can the hon. Gentleman give us an interim Report?

MR. GRANT LAWSON: That rests with the Royal Commission.

Scottish National Gallery.

MR. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland why a Supplementary Estimate has not been presented for a grant for pictures for the National Gallery for Scotland, in view of the note on the main Estimate for the year that it might have to be reconsidered when the Committee on the Board of Manufactures had presented its Report.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The hon. Member will find a sum of £2,000 provided in the Estimates for 1904-5 for the purchase of pictures for the National Gallery of Scotland, and of this sum £1,000 is in respect of the current financial year in which no Vote was taken.

Judge Ross's Court—Insolvent Estates.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any steps are being taken to classify the number of insolvent estates in Judge Ross's Court with a view to their sale under the Land Purchase Act of last session.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The Land Judge has taken steps which will ensure that an estate must be brought to sale within a reasonable time or else the petition will be dismissed. During the past seven years the amount of the gross rental collectible in his Court has been reduced by one-half owing to the extensive sales effected under the Land Purchase Acts.

Shannon Steamboat Traffic.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the withdrawal of the county contributions to the development of the Shannon traffic, the Board of Agriculture will take any steps to support the continuation of a steamer service on that river.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Department of Agriculture has no funds at its disposal for subsidising this service.

Pier Accommodation in County Kerry.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that an inspection of the pier accommodation at Valentia and Reenard, county Kerry, has been held; and whether, in view of the amount proposed to be expended there under the Marine Works Act, he can state when the works will be commenced.

MR. WYNDHAM: No specific undertaking has been given to expend money provided by this Act on works at Valentia. The steam ferry proposed to be provided by the Knight of Kerry was conditional on suitable pier accommodation being provided. Plans for alternative schemes are still under the consideration of the Knight of Kerry.

MR. BOLAND: Is it not the fact that two sums, each of £1,000, were proposed to be allocated for the ferry at Valentia?

MR. WYNDHAM: What is now being considered is the nature of the accommodation.

Kilkenny Stone Industries and Railway Rates.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the 1st of January of this year the Great Southern and Western Railway Company doubled the rate per ton for the carriage from Kilkenny to Dublin of polished or dressed limestone and marble; and whether, as the production of polished marble and limestone is an important industry in Kilkenny, he will cause the Department of Agriculture to take action to prevent its being injured by railway charges for transit to Dublin and other markets.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Department is in communication with the railway company in this matter.

Irish Language in National Schools.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many national schools will be prevented from teaching Irish as an extra owing to the recent regulations as to the general standard of the school.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am informed by the Commissioners that it is not possible to answer this Question with any near approach to accuracy. A considerable number of schools cannot at present be regarded as reaching the standard "good," but it by no means follows that a corresponding number of teachers will be prevented by the recent regulations from teaching Irish as an extra subject. In consequence of the public interest aroused by the new regulations, I have been in communication with the Commissioners in respect of some points in the recent circular which seemed to me to invite their further observations. Under the old results system, no special fee was payable for Irish in any class lower than fifth. Under the new regulations a fee will be payable in classes as low as the fourth. If Irish or any other extra subject be taught by a person unconnected with a national school, who holds a certificate of competency satisfactory to the Commissioners, such teachers will not, as might be assumed, be penalised in any way, or debarred from earning fees by reason of the fact that the ordinary school teacher has failed to conduct his school in such a manner as to earn a "good" report. Moreover, it is intended to give the inspectors a discretionary power to recommend that a teacher of a school shall be allowed to give instruction in extra branches under exceptional circumstances, even though such teacher fails to secure a "good" report on his school. The inspectors will be required, in their reports, to take into consideration the social condition, ages, etc., of the pupils, as well as the locality of the school, and any other circumstances that might render exceptional treatment necessary.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Who is the individual responsible for these regulations? Tell us the name of the gentleman.

MR. WYNDHAM: I cannot do that. The responsibility rests with the Commissioners of National Education.

MR. T. M. HEALY: But there is some one driving the wheel. Who is it?

MR. WYNDHAM: I can only say that the Commissioners, as a body, are responsible.

Belfast Police and Roman Catholic Bazaars.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the District Officer of the Royal Irish Constabulary of the North West district, Belfast, has signed a communication, which he sent to the barracks, asking for volunteers to sell tickets in connection with a bazaar for the purpose of raising funds in aid of a Roman Catholic church in Dublin; and what action, if any, he intends taking in the matter.

MR. WYNDHAM: The fact is correctly stated. For the past thirty years the Roman Catholic members of the force in Dublin have attended service at this church. It was considered, therefore, that the church has special claims on the generosity of Roman Catholic members of the Constabulary throughout Ireland, all of whom have attended service there at one time or another. The District Inspector acted with the approval of the Inspector-General. The matter does not call for any action on my part.

Use of the Irish Language in Law Courts.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether, in view of the alleged illegal conduct of Mr. M'Donagh Mahony in signing warrants and other documents in Irish, steps will be taken to recover the fine which the Statute 11 George II. imposes for a breach of it.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Government does not propose to sue for the recovery of the penalty in this case.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: If this magistrate has acted illegally who is responsible for suing him for penalties?

MR. WYNDHAM: It is open to the hon. Member to sue him.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: This is a very important matter. What Statute does the right hon. Gentleman rely upon. The Lord Chancellor we are told relies on 2nd George II., while the Attorney-General relies on the 22nd George II., and neither of them deals with this question.

Mr. WYNDHAM asked for notice of the Question.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Will the right hon. Gentleman lay on the Table the correspondence between the Lord Chancellor and the magistrate?

Mr. WYNDHAM: I cannot answer that without notice.

Captain DONELAN (Cork Co., E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to repeal this Statute?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Longford Postmen.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General to state the hours of duty imposed on the three postmen engaged in letter distribution in Longford; whether he is aware that the man who comes on duty at 11 p.m. practically remains on till 11 a.m. the next day, as the interval between 4 a.m. and 6 a.m. given him for rest is useless for sleeping purposes; and whether, both in the interests of the health and efficiency of the staff, he will direct a re-arrangement of the hours so as to enable a man going off duty at 4 a.m. to remain off till at least 11 a.m. the same day.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The hours of duty of the three established town postmen at Longford are strictly in accordance with the rules, inasmuch as the attendance does not exceed eight hours, and admits of a clear interval of at least nine hours at home in each case. The arrangement to which special reference is made seems, however, to be inconvenient, and I will see whether the circumstances admit of its being improved.

Longford Post Office—Station Duties.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that the contract to carry parcels and letters to and from Longford Post Office and Longford Railway Station, advertised for last June, was intended to provide a car for the purpose of relieving the local letter carriers from carrying the mails as well as parcels to and from the station, he will explain why the contract actually entered into does not include the mails at 9.13 a.m., 5.0 p.m., and 7.18 p.m., so that the postmen have yet to carry these mail bags up and down the main street of Longford; and whether he will direct that the original arrangement in this matter be carried out.

Lord STANLEY: The station services at the hours mentioned by the hon. Member were not included in the contract, as the weight of the mails at those hours is not such as to necessitate their being conveyed by horse and car. A hand-cart is provided for the purpose where the weight is appreciable, but the postmen apparently prefer not to use it.

Irish Food Exports.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the quantity of food exported from Ireland, and to the fact that food forms the largest part of the imports into Great Britain, and in view of the desirability of making the Returns of these imports complete and accurate, especially with regard to butter, meat, eggs, and poultry, he will undertake to separate in future editions of the Statistical Abstract and other returns of figures the exports and imports of Ireland from those of Great Britain.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): No account is kept by the Customs Department of the removal of goods generally from one part of the Kingdom to another, and it is therefore impossible to comply with the hon. Member's suggestion in this respect. Particulars of the direct foreign trade of Irish ports distinguishing principal articles are already given in Volume II. of the "Annual Statement of Trade."

Mr. LOUGH: Is it not the fact that the expense of doing this work is charged on the Irish Estimates. Is it not of great importance that we should have some account?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: That Question should be addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

*Mr. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in the early part of the last century the exports from Ireland to Great Britain were always given separately?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Really I have no control over the Customs. That is no part of the duty of the Board of Trade. These Questions must be addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Sunday Train Service from Dublin to Sligo.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware of the desire in the Midland counties of Ireland for one through return train run on Sundays from Broadstone, Dublin, to Sligo; and whether he will represent to the Midland Great Western Railway Company the desirability of inaugurating this service during the coming summer.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: This is not a matter in which the Board of Trade could usefully interfere with the discretion of the railway company concerned.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: Seeing that the right hon. Gentleman when he was Chief Secretary made representations to this company on matters of public interest, cannot he do so now?

[No answer was returned.]

Church Discipline.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has recently been drawn to the alleged continuance of ecclesiastical disorders in many dioceses of the Church of England; and whether he will move, at an early date, or give facilities to a Motion, for the appointment of a Select Committee of this House, to inquire into the nature and extent of present ecclesiastical disorders, into proposed legislative remedies, and into other matters connected therewith; and to report thereon.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am grateful for the courtesy of the hon. Gentleman, who has put this Question off for a week at my request. The subject is one of very great interest and importance, and I have done my best with such means as are at my disposal to find out what progress has been made in connection with what is described in the Question as the disorders in the Church of England. On the whole, I believe the progress has been considerable, though I am afraid it cannot be alleged that it has been as great as most of us would desire. There is great doubt as to the facts in this case. There are many persons who believe that these disorders are widely spread over England, that they permeate the whole system of the National Church; and others who, on the other hand, hold that they are extremely restricted in area and confined to one or two particular spots. I think both of those opposing parties have some right to ask for an investigation, and I do not think, therefore, that the Government would be justified in refusing it. The only question for determination is what form the inquiry should take. The hon. Gentleman suggests a Select Committee. I do not think that, for many reasons, that is the most convenient form of inquiry. I do not think even a Joint Committee of the two Houses is the most convenient form—certainly not the form most in accordance with precedent. There have been many Royal Commissions to inquire into and deal with questions of discipline in the Church of England, but there has been, so far as I am aware, no Committee of the House of Commons. I have not gone through the whole of our records to make sure that that statement is accurate. I am quite confident, however, that I am right in saying that the general stream of precedent runs in the direction of dealing with these very important questions by a Royal Commission. In these circumstances I shall lose no time in forming such a Commission and recommending it to His Majesty the King.

Mr. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): May I ask whether, in view of the fact that the conditions and circumstances of the Church of England are unprecedented, it would not be advisable to depart from precedent and appoint a Committee of the House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Having given the matter the best consideration in my power, I am disposed, on the merits, to take a somewhat different view from my hon. friend; and I feel that a Commission would be the best instrument which we have at our command.

STANDING COMMITTEES.

Ordered, That all Standing Committees have leave to print and circulate with the Votes the Minutes of their Proceedings and any Amended Clauses of Bills committed to them.—(*Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice.*)

COMMONS.

Ordered, That Mr. Crombie, Mr. Jeffreys, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, Mr. William Jones, Mr. Loyd, Mr. John Campbell, and Mr. Freeman-Thomas, be Members of the Select Committee on Commons.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for Lancashire (North East Lancashire, Rossendale Division), in the room of Sir William Mather, knight (Manor of Northstead).—(*Mr. Robert Spencer.*)

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to make further provision with respect to the arrangement of Polling Districts for the Election of County Councillors." [Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [*Lords.*]

And, also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to amend the Law relating to the arrangement of Polling Districts in Parliamentary Boroughs." [Polling Arrangements Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill [*Lords.*]

NEW BILLS.

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1886," presented by Mr. Leveson-Gower; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 115.]

TOWN HOLDINGS BILL.

"To give compensation to Occupying Tenants of Town Holdings for beneficial improvements," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Sir Walter Foster, Sir John Brunner, Mr. Emmott, Mr. Kearley, and Sir James Woodhouse; to be read a second time upon Friday, 18th March, and to be printed. [Bill 116.]

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Main Question [7th March], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Main Question again proposed.

MR. GUEST (Plymouth) complained that the Secretary of State for War in his speech had laid down no general principles, and had not stated whether the Army was intended for home defence or for foreign aggression, while with regard to the question of cost, the only expression of opinion the right hon. Gentleman had given in the matter of economy had amounted to his desire to make some few adventitious savings. He had told them nothing about the distribution of the Army in times of peace, he had said nothing about the reorganisation of the War Office, and he had left them with the impression that the old state of muddle and confusion was still to continue. There was, in fact, nothing in his speech to indicate that in the future there would be any guarantee against a repetition of the regrettable incidents and misfortunes which marked the outbreak of the late South African war. What made that all the more noteworthy was the fact that directly the right hon. Gentleman left the province of the Regular Army he embarked on a discussion of the Auxiliary Forces in which he expressed very decided views. For instance, in regard to the Militia, he declared that it was in a profoundly unsatisfactory condition, and he traced the cause of that largely to the force having been regarded as an adjunct to the Line. He also told them it was his policy to abolish the new Militia Reserve. Then in regard to the Volunteers he told them that he had definite views, and he did not think that the Volunteers—not through any fault of their own—were fulfilling the duties which the country expected of them. The same remark applied to the Yeomanry. He said that the Yeomanry gave him the greatest possible satisfaction, and in that respect he acknowledged the services rendered by his predecessor. He (Mr. Guest) was inclined to give credit for the present satisfactory condition of the Yeomanry force to the late Secretary for War, and he hoped that the present holder of that office would avoid the mistake which had been made in regard to the Militia, and would not treat the Yeomanry as an adjunct of the Cavalry. The contrast between the way in which the right hon. Gentleman treated the Regular Army and the Auxiliary Forces was very marked indeed.

The House had naturally looked forward to his statement as indicating what would be the policy of the War Office for the coming year. But the right hon. Gentleman said nothing in his speech about the Committee of Defence. It would be interesting to know whether the Secretary for War was of opinion that the creation of a permanent nucleus of the Committee of Defence was desirable or undesirable in the interests of the policy he was recommending to the country. Again, he said nothing about the thinking department of the Army, upon which so much stress was laid by the War Commission. Further, there was not a word on the General Staff, and there was no indication whether he thought that the creation of that body would save the country from a repetition of any of the awkward incidents that had occurred at the beginning of the late war. It was peculiar, too, that the right hon. Gentleman said nothing about the Army Corps system. It would be interesting to know whether he recommended the retention of that system, and whether he considered that that system, either as a military instrument or as an administrative unit, was suited to the needs of the country. They did not know whether he agreed with the recommendation for the creation of eight districts under major-generals, as was suggested in the Report of the Reconstruction Committee. Then they had not a word in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman about the question of decentralisation. What was his policy in regard to that? They knew nothing as yet. They knew nothing, too, in regard to the terms of service under which enlistments were at present made. It was a well known fact that under the present system of enlistment for three years there was some doubt as to whether at the completion of the present year the right hon. Gentleman would be able to find the necessary drafts for our Indian and colonial services. That was a very important matter, and surely it was one they might have expected to figure in the annual speech of the right hon. Gentleman. Then there was the question of the linked battalions, which went to the very root of the whole War Office and Army organisation. Under the present system of linked battalions we had very large garrisons retained in this country—far larger than many thought necessary for the defence of the country, always supposing, of course, that the defence of the country was to be entrusted to the Regular Army. Surely on that question they might have expected some observations in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman.

To his mind the right hon. Gentleman's statement was altogether inexplicable. After all, he was responsible for the triumvirate of the Reconstitution Committee, and, as far as could be understood, he agreed with the Report of that body. He had told them that he regarded it as a coherent whole—a coherent work from the beginning to the middle and to the end, and that it was necessary that it should be either adopted or rejected as a whole. Yet he had adopted one half of the Report and had ignored the other half altogether. He had established an Army Council—a very important step, and one of the main recommendations of the Committee. He had gone much further than that, for he had removed what was, perhaps, the greatest impediment of all to Army reform, he had determined to be master in his own Department, and had taken the extreme step, and no doubt to him a very painful step, of dismissing the old *personnel* of the War Office. He had now under him a staff of men who, in a sense, were his own creatures, and who had, no doubt, been appointed with the object of carrying out great reforms. All this gigantic preparation, involving a breach with the past, had recently been introduced, and yet when the supreme moment arrived, when he was expected to propose to the House and the country the reforms for which these preparations were made, he came down and made a speech in which there was nothing to indicate what reforms he intended to carry out with the machinery he had created. He had contented himself by making a sort of interim statement. He had told them that this was the last time that such Estimates as he had brought forward, might be expected to be presented to the House of Commons. It was a very great pity that the right hon. Gentleman had missed the opportunity which now offered itself for carrying the great reforms upon which he had, it was believed, insisted. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that they were at the parting of the ways, but there was nothing in his speech to indicate what was the new path he had determined to strike out in order to carry the reforms which were assumed to be desired. This procrastination was very much to be regretted. Ministers to day had notoriously short lives, and it would have been an advantage to the cause of Army reform if the right hon. Gentleman had left a record of his personal feeling as to the direction and extent in which Army reform might possibly be developed. People's wills were sometimes respected, and some such sort of testamentary inheritance from the right hon. Gentleman to his successor would have been of value to the House of Commons, because even if the right hon. Gentleman had not survived to put his scheme into execution through public opinion being directed into other channels, it still would have been something to have had on record his plans. There was no doubt public opinion was prepared to support the right hon. Gentleman in his task. The temper of the House, the temper of the country, based on the accumulation of evidence which they had in the Reports of the War Commission and of the Reorganisation Committee, were all in favour of the cause of reform, and it was very unfortunate, under the circumstances, that the right hon. Gentleman should have contented himself with a half-hearted presentment of the subject.

He was quite aware that the Secretary of State for War was not ommipotent. It might be there were difficulties in his path which were concealed from the outside observer, but they would like to know very much what was the sinister influence which prevented the adoption of reforms which were by common consent so very necessary. They knew that the Prime Minister took great interest in the question; they knew that last autumn the right hon. Gentleman indicated that he was in favour of reform. Then what were the difficulties which had arisen in the path of those reforms? Were there differences of opinion in the Cabinet which prevented the right hon. Gentleman from having his way? Was this another attempt to keep the Party together? was it another attempt to sacrifice what would be the logical outcome of previous sequences of events in order that private feelings might be assuaged and awkward incidents might not arise for discussion? It was very unfortunate if that were so, because, whatever might be the necessity, in other matters, to keep the Party together, whatever sacrifices might be required, it seemed to him that this was a moment when other considerations should prevail, and it was most deplorable that the opportunity for securing substantial reforms should be missed. Of course, during the debates of the Army Estimates they would have many opportunities of getting from the right hon. Gentleman indications of what his intentions were, and how he proposed to develop his policy. But he could only repeat again that he thought it was most unfortunate that the right hon. Gentleman had not come boldly forward with a definite scheme of reform of a far-reaching character—a scheme for which, no doubt, he would have obtained support both inside and outside the House of Commons, a support which would have greatly facilitated the passage of his proposals through Parliament. He hoped even now it was not too late to exhort the right hon. Gentleman to adopt some such course, and thus secure the practical application of the principles which he was believed to have in his mind.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said he wished to direct the attention of the House for a few minutes to one specific matter, and he approached it in the character of a civilian. It was one affecting the personal rights and liberty of the subject. It had to deal with the post of Judge Advocate-General, which he held should be constituted on its old basis of a Ministerial and Parliamentary office whose holder would be directly responsible to Parliament. To make this a non-political office was to abolish it, and its abolition was to be deplored, not only on account of its historical associations, but because by virtue of his office the Judge Advocate-General had always been the responsible adviser of the Government in military matters, just as the Attorney-General and the other law officers in that House were their responsible advisers in civil matters. The Judge Advocate-General, too, was essentially the King's Minister, and he had a privilege enjoyed by no other Minister of the Crown, viz., of the personal access at all times and places to the presence of the Crown in order to tender advice. It was desirable that the man who was responsible for revising the proceedings of Courts-martial should be in the House to answer interrogators. It was a great pity that because of some wretched cheese-paring economy this ancient historical office had been abolished, and had been made a non-political post. An enormous number of Courts-martial were held every year by officers who could not be said to be experts in military law, and it was the duty of the Judge Advocate-General to revise the sentences and to lay the results of his revision before the Crown and the Commander-in-Chief. In May last the Secretary of State for War, replying to a Question by the hon. Member for Shrewsbury, stated that the number of Court-martial proceedings submitted to the Judge Advocate-General's Department, and of convictions wholly quashed in the three preceeding years were as follows:—1900, 17,711 Courts-martial, 47 quashed; 1901, 19,349 Courts-martial, 67 quashed; 1902, 14,732 Courts-martial, 47 quashed. Having regard to the fact that during the time this was going on the Judge Advocate-General had been appointed by the Board of Trade the head of a Commission it was utterly impossible that he could have personally revised these proceedings. They must have been revised by officials whom this House could not reach. When the matter referred to was brought before the late Secretary of State for War, he absolutely denied responsibility with reference to the proceedings of Courts-martial. He said it was the Judge Advocate-General who had charge of them. A more unconstitutional and improper statement was never made by a Minister. The charge he made was that under the present system the liberties of private soldiers were not safe. This state of matters would remain until there was a Minister, a legal adviser in military matters for the Crown, in this House. There were things done and outside influence brought to bear that could never have been tolerated if the Judge Advocate-General had been in this House. The Court-martial at Wellington Barracks in July last year was brought about by great pressure being put on the Government eighteen months after the events to which the proceedings referred. The facts were known. A civilian in a hotel at Cape Town was maltreated, subjected to shocking indignity, and horrid indecency by ten officers. An action was brought against them in the Civil Court, and a number of the defendants were found liable in damages to the person who was attacked. Mr. Bartley, stockbroker, Johannesburg, who at the proceedings in Cape Town spoke in regard to the horrible acts of indecency which took place was asked by telegram on 5th May whether he would come back and give evidence as to the indecency, and a telegram was received on 6th May stating that he would not. The charge, or what was sometimes called the indictment, against the officers was drawn in such a way as to secure their acquittal on the charge of indecency. That was a cut-and-dried arrangement by some of the understrappers in the Judge Advocate-General's Office. If the indictment had been drafted in the ordinary way he believed the men would have been convicted. The fact that the Judge Advocate-General was not a member of the Government produced desperate hardships in the case of private soldiers whose cases might be investigated by callous clerks. It was a shield for rich and high-placed offenders from the course of justice. He implored hon. and right hon. Gentlemen to assist him in his plea for the re-establishment of this ancient and honourable Parliamentary office.

*Colonel BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince) said he wished to refer to the strength of the home regiments at Aldershot intended to be first sent out on Service. At the present time from a half to two-thirds had to be added from the Reserve, and he regarded that as a serious state of matters. The Reserve system, as had been shown in the South African war, worked thoroughly well when once put in operation, but it was a very difficult thing to put it in operation. The Reserve was called out by proclamation declaring that a national danger existed. The result was that every Government delayed a long time before making that declaration.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think I am right in saying that the matter the hon. and gallant Member is referring to is prescribed by statute. It does not arise on the Estimates.

Colonel BLUNDELL said he was not proposing to alter the statute, but he was going to suggest to the Secretary of State how the matter might be dealt with in another way. He would propose that there should be a number of men allowed to be on prolonged furlough and ready to be called back by the officer commanding the regiment. The only other way of meeting the difficulty was to send out the young men—at lease as many of them as the doctor would pass —because anything was better than this terrible delay. He strongly urged that the commander of a regiment should be able to fill up his regiment before the Reserves were called out. As to Garrison Artillery he thought they should be largely composed of Militia. Then as to the Defence Committee he had no objection to a small department, as it was called, with a Secretary: but he objected entirely to the confidential Reports of the Intelligence Department being handed over from that Department to another. That would be absolutely fatal; these confidential reports should be kept under the hand and key of the officer in charge of the Intelligence Department—as if it was thought necessary to change the heads of Departments, at the change of system these officers should be compensated for the financial loss incurred.

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.) said that those hon. Members who for many years past had taken an interest in Army reform and had usually acted in sympathy with the right hon. Gentleman who now represented the War Office were glad at length to find that he occupied that high office. But they found themselves in a very awkward position, inasmuch as they had not been taken into the confidence of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman told the House that we were standing at the parting of the ways, but their difficulty was that the Estimates went in one direction and the right hon. Gentleman's views and aspirations travelled along another road. The right hon. Gentleman in the outset of his speech made the very remarkable statement that—

> "Until a short time ago the country did not quite know what duties the Army was expected to perform."

neither did the House at the present moment. And the right hon. Gentleman continued—

> "At this moment we do not possess the full knowledge which we might some day possess,"

that was what they complained of—

> "but what the strength of the Army ought to be and what its duties, were subjects for professional judgment and for the judgment of the House."

In other words, it amounted to the old nursery rhyme, "Shut your eyes and open your mouth and see what you will get." They were asked to discuss these Estimates because the right hon. Gentleman hoped to introduce others based on a different system. Surely that was an insult to the House. They were told that the Army and the Navy were to be considered together; but that was what they had been contending for for the last ten years, and what the right hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean had been demanding for twenty years. If that was what was about to take place he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that he would have no more ardent supporters than the Army reformers on both sides of the House. He asked the right hon. Gentleman upon what horse they were to put their money? Was it on the Army Corps system which they were told by the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor, not long ago, held the field, in which statement the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor was backed up by the Prime Minister? Had the Government changed their minds? Had they abandoned the Army Corps system and the linked battalions? [An Hon. Member: Yes.] Some hon. Gentleman said "Yes," but he would like to hear from the Secretary of State for War whether or not that was the case.

They had been led to believe that there was diminished expenditure, but he maintained that diminished expenditure was altogether illusory unless the old system was not to be maintained. Everything pointed to increased expenditure and the diminished expenditure was apparent rather than real. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of "a machine that would do our work . . . . capable of performing the task that may be imposed upon it." They had heard that statement over and over again from the Treasury Bench; what they were anxious to know was when they were to get it. It was the old story of "Live horse and you'll get grass." The existing position amounted to this:—The Foot Guards, the best troops in the country were reduced 2,000; the Infantry, the backbone of the Army, were reduced by 5,000; the Army Reserve was below its usual strength; the Militia Reserve was practically gone; the Militia itself was in a deplorable state; the Volunteers were decreasing. The right hon. Gentleman was proud of the fact that, for the first time in history, the Yeomanry had now nearly arrived at its normal strength, although he did not mention that the force was still ineffective inasmuch as half the horses were borrowed. Then in connection with this diminished expenditure, some £750,000 were taken from the surplus remaining after the war. They were promised thirty batteries of new guns, but all these were for India; that *carte blanche* had been given to the manufacturers to turn out as many new guns as fast as they could; but the payment for these guns would come on the Estimates with which many hon. Members now in the House would have nothing to do. The right hon. Gentleman boasted of the new rifle; but he understood that its only merit was that it was somewhat shorter than the present weapon; and to do this was to cause an expenditure of £2,000,000. The right hon. Gentleman acknowledged that the recruiting was bad, and that any charges for the Somaliland expenditure were not on the Estimates. The whole thing was preposterous. The idea that the Army Estimates had been diminished might be true, but it was only partially true, and was only accomplished by diminishing our fighting force to a lower point than at any previous period of our history. The right hon. Gentleman told the House that the new field gun was superior to any other weapon in Europe. Of course, new guns adopted by any Government were always the best in the world! The right hon. Gentleman never touched on the very basis of the whole Army scheme —the question of recruiting. They would probably be told that the right hon. Gentleman had a trump card up his sleeve; but they wanted to know what the trump card was. They had heard of Part I. and Part II. of the Report of the three gentlemen appointed to reorganise the War Office—one of whom was a brilliant strategist, and the other two were comparatively unknown. In Part II. they were told that Part I. had already been adopted, but the Estimates had nothing to do with any one of the parts of the Report. He had no doubt that if they could see Part III. they might have a fully and completely developed scheme, but it had nothing whatever to do with the Estimates. It was a monstrous thing to ask the House to discuss those Estimates when they knew full well that the right hon. Gentleman had no complete scheme to submit to the House.

As regards recruiting, the right hon. Gentleman acknowledged that the returns were very bad and that the quality of the recruits was bad. The right hon. Gentleman said that one reason why the recruiting was so bad was that the recruiting for the Artillery and Cavalry had been closed. But all the recruits that could have been obtained for those branches had been obtained during the war, and very few men could now be obtained for them. Efforts had been made to bring the Foot Guards up to their proper standards by offering bounties to men to exchange from the Artillery and Cavalry. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Army was now a splendid career for a young man. That was not the opinion of the youth of the country from which the Army was drawn. Although he himself was the first to admit that the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor made a most gallant effort to improve the position of the soldier, still he had not done sufficient to induce a consistent flow of the right class of men into the service. In order to keep up the Army Corps system, which was heartily supported by the Prime Minister, a large number of men were engaged for three years. The authorities believed, rightly or wrongly, he thought wrongly himself, that a large number of men would re-engage and that in that way they would be able to obtain men for the Indian reliefs. In answer to a Question put by him to the Secretary of State the right hon. Gentleman said that some 4,000 or 5,000 three-years' men were serving in India and that 3,600 were under orders for India. Therefore the War Office was endeavouring to keep up the garrison in India with men who were engaged for three years only. The Government had broken faith with those men by sending them to India, and unless another gross injustice was to be done to them they should be returned to this country before they had completed their three years service. The men were nominally eighteen years of age, but they all knew that youths enlisted at fifteen, sixteen, or seventeen years, and all soldiers who had experience of India said that a regiment of young soldiers sent to that country practically dropped to pieces and that a large number of the men succumbed to the climate. It was the custom to send young soldiers to the hills for a year, and therefore a large portion of the Indian garrison was absolutely ineffective. The 4,000 or 5,000 men who were sent out would cost the country something like £500,000 sterling. It was well known that it did not pay the Indian Government to accept the services of any man for less than five years, but men were now being sent out for three years at a cost of £100 each to India and £20 to this country. This country would have to pay £500,000 in order to provide bogus reliefs for the Indian garrison. The right hon. Gentleman might say that that was the fault of the system introduced by his predecessor, but there was no sum in the present Estimates dealing with the matter and there would have to be an enormous charge next year in order to carry out the Indian reliefs. The three years men who would insist on returning to this country would cost about an additional £1,000,000 sterling. More than half that sum ought to be borne on this year's Estimates, but was being thrust forward to next year's Estimates. It might be said that India had to be garrisoned, but he should have thought that the large number of seasoned men in this country who had seen service in South Africa would suffice for that purpose if they were engaged for seven years and were given sufficient pay. At present India was being garrisoned by the Government practically breaking faith with the seven years' men who were being kept a year longer in that country. He hoped that no such injustice would be done to the three years' men.

With reference to the Militia the right hon. Gentleman admitted that it was in a profoundly unsatisfactory state. Its present strength was only 75,000 men, and they knew from their experience of the war what a wastage there would be if they were called to arms. He failed to see how the Militia could be rendered effective unless a further charge were placed on the Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman very properly pointed out that the Militia had been ruined owing to the fact that it was looked upon simply as an adjunct or feeder of the Army. When the officer commanding had got his regiment into proper order he was robbed of his best officers and his best recruits, in order to bolster up the Line battalions. He himself did not see how they were going to attract officers and men to the Militia without further expense. In endeavouring to deal with the Estimates the Committee were simply flogging a dead horse because they were given to understand that they were only interim Estimates which would only run for a certain time, and that the real Estimates would be of quite another character. He thought it unfair to bring forward the Estimates in this way. A

Vote on Account should be taken and the proper Estimates presented when the Committee was in possession of the new system. In other words they were asked to discuss the Estimates in the dark. The right hon. Gentleman began his speech by saying that they ought to know what the Army was for and what it was expected to do. If there was one thing the Army was expected to do it was to defend the Indian Empire. They knew the difficulties existing in the East, and that they might be called upon to place troops on the north-west frontier. Every soldier knew that if they placed the garrison on the frontier it would have to be replaced by troops from this country. It was said that they could get Militia and Volunteers, but how were they to provide against the wastage. They knew what the foreign military attachés in South Africa thought of the mob which Lord Roberts led. They were told that the war was to be finished with unconditional surrender, but it was brought to an end by a conditional surrender at a cost of £250,000,000 and 20,000 lives. If a similar difficulty arose it would mean conscription in its most drastic form. The Army was now not a whit better than it was ten years ago. The country was now no better prepared than it was before the South African war. Under such conditions it was a most unfair thing to ask the House to discuss these Estimates and leave them in the dark as to the plan of the Government as foreshadowed by those portions of the Report which they had accepted.

*MAJOR EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) expressed the most fervent hope that the reforms foreshadowed in the Report would be put into force and adopted by the Government as soon as possible. He confessed he did not quite understand the attitude of some of his hon. friends and the hon. Gentlemen opposite in this matter. The Secretary of State for War had expressed his warm approval of the reforms suggested by the Committee, and in so doing had practically answered a large proportion of the many Questions which had been addressed to him in this debate. What did hon. Gentlemen want? They were on the eve of getting almost everything they had asked for; they could not expect every demand to be acceded to immediately. Last year he and those who thought with him criticised the six Army Corps scheme, and though their criticisms were then derided in this House it was subsequently discovered from the Report of the Royal Commission on the War that in those criticisms they had voiced the opinions of most distinguished soldiers, and to crown all came the Report of Lord Esher's Committee condemning the scheme, which if not already dead was rapidly expiring. They had also asked for decentralisation and a general staff, and these reforms also were being adopted. Indeed there was not a point which had been raised which had not been dealt with and adopted by the Committee of three. That being so the least hon. Members could do now was to give the Government all the support and encouragement they could to adopt those very schemes for which they had been fighting so long. He did not say that there were not points which needed discussion and further elucidation. He was not satisfied, for instance, that the creation of a separate and independent Military Bureau under the immediate control of the Prime Minister of the day was altogether necessary or wise. There seemed to him, as far as one was able to understand it, an underlying risk of divided and antagonistic military opinion between the advisers of the Secretary of State for War and the advisers of the Prime Minister. He feared also that this arrangement might give rise to a want of that continuity in scientific military preparation which should always be going on irrespective of the immediate political situation. A change of Government and of a Prime Minister with a policy in diametric opposition to that of his predecessor would necessarily affect and modify the attitude of the immediate military advisers appointed and controlled by the head of the Government. He would at first sight far rather see the Bureau of the Committee of Defence worked as a subordinate department of the general staff of the Army; so that in the regrettable event of the political situation needing the intervention of the soldiers, there should be only one recognised military authority to whom the Cabinet would refer for advice as to the military requirements. He hoped they should have an early opportunity of discussing such points as these. Meanwhile those earnestly desirous of real Army reform could only express a fervent hope that the Secretary of State would receive the full support of the Government and of this House, as he was sure he would receive the support of the country, in carrying through these great changes with which he had declared himself to be in such full and complete agreement. As to other reforms, such as the great problems of recruiting, the linked battalion system, the feeding of the units abroad with men from the home battalion, the reorganisation of the Volunteers, etc., etc., they all knew that there was no one in this country, let alone in this House, who had a more profound knowledge of these questions, or a more earnest desire to solve them, than his right hon. friend. He, for one, was only too glad that these matters should be in such capable hands, and he was willing to leave them there in the confident belief that the Secretary of State would bring them before the House as soon as he could. Surely they might be a little patient, and give him time to mature his plans, dealing as they must do with matters of the utmost difficulty and complexity.

Comments had been made in this debate by the Leader of the Opposition and others, as to the confusion which had arisen in regard to the Estimates, etc., owing to the recommendations contained in these Reports. Of course some confusion was bound to arise when great and drastic changes of this kind were in process of development. But of this they might be sure, that the temporary confusion existing was nothing when compared to the permanent chaos which was to be replaced. The origin and constitutional form of the Committee of three had also been criticised. It might not have been in accordance with precedent, but it had a better claim upon our regard. For it was in accordance with the dictates of wisdom and common sense. Its origin seemed simple enough to him. They had a Report from a Royal Commission disclosing grave and terrible faults which had brought this country to the brink of disaster. That Commission made no direct recommendation as to how these faults were to be remedied. The Government then immediately appointed a Committee composed of the three best men who could be found to complete the work which the Commission had begun, and to formulate reforms which an exhaustive enquiry had shown to be necessary. The Leader of the Opposition laughed at the frequent use of the word "vital," and condemned the hastiness of the proceedings. He did not think anyone reading these Reports impartially, could fail to agree that the changes recommended were vital. And if the right hon. Gentleman asked what was the need for hurry, he, in return would ask what case could be made out for delay. This thing needed to be done, and if so surely it were best done quickly. They had delayed long enough in all conscience, and he trusted that the Government would go on as they had begun, and act with that promptitude and thoroughness which, in his judgment, the situation seemed to demand. For many years past the War Office and the Army had been labouring and suffering under a bad and rotten system. What had been lacking? A sufficient head of steam in the country and in Parliament to drag this antiquated machinery to the scrap heap and the dust destructor. The Royal Commission and the Committee had at length got up that head of steam. Surely they should be guilty of a supreme act of folly if they did anything to damp the fire or reduce the pressure for which they had waited so long.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) said there would be many who would not be sorry to see such a result as the hon. Member had just sketched and who would think it a fitting and proper end for much of the machinery which had been at work in every department of the Government for the last ten years. Before going further into the question of these Estimates he desired to ask two specific Questions of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War. If the right hon. Gentleman looked at the Memorandum issued by the Secretary of State for War for 1903–4 he would find an unexpended balance of £300,000 under the Mowatt programme and so far as could be seen no provision was made in the Estimates for the spending of the balance. He wished to know whether on the one hand the Estimates were not misleading, or whether, on the other hand, notwithstanding all promises made to the contrary, of the whole of the money recommended to be spent by the Mowatt Commission £300,000 had been left unspent because of the exigencies of the Budget which was to come. The other Question was of a more technical character. If the right hon. Gentleman looked at his Report of this year he would find that the whole of the Artillery machine guns would be finished by 1904, and now there was to be a new pattern of quick-firing equipment. What he wished to know was would those guns, as soon as the new pattern equipment was started, be put upon the scrap heap. During the last two years 530 guns had been added to fortresses, field batteries, and Horse Artillery batteries for service at home and in India. Were the whole of those guns to be thrown on one side, the money spent on them wasted, and an entirely new pattern of gun provided? Further, had any notice been taken by the War Office of the statement of the War Commission that the maintenance of fifteen calibres of guns was a source of great expense at home and inconvenience in the field, and of the recommendation that only four calibres of guns should be maintained in the future? The Secretary of State had referred to the state of recruiting as being unsatisfactory. How could he have imagined it would be anything else? Did he not remember the "exact parallel" drawn by the present Secretary of State for India between the British Army and indentured Chinese labour. Such a parallel was not likely to induce men to enlist in the Army.

*Mr. SPEAKER reminded the hon. Member that to refer to debates in the same session on another subject was out of order.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he would pass from that matter to the Report of the Reorganisation Committee. During the last ten years there had been no less than four Reports dealing with the reorganisation of that Department, and three Orders in Council re-arranging the duties of high officials in the War Office. Each of those Reports had been issued in a great hurry, and was contradictory of its predecessor. The last issue occurred simultaneously with a discussion in this House upon the defects of organisation revealed by the War Commission, and the coincidence might be thought by some to have been brought about to distract attention from those defects. The House heard yesterday that this last Report had been adopted *en bloc*.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): No such statement was made by me.

Mr. CHARLES, HOBHOUSE said that if the right hon. Gentleman would consult the reports of his speech in the newspapers he would see that that was the phrase he was reported to have used.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: What I said was that I trusted it might be adopted *en bloc*.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE accepted the right hon. Gentleman's correction; he had simply quoted the words as reported. It was also stated in the newspapers that the further consideration of this Report had been postponed owing to the attitude taken up by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Secretary of State for India. Consequently the House did not know whether the Report was to be adopted *en bloc* or to be rejected *en bloc*, whether the position of the War Office was to be regulated by the new scheme or by the old scheme. If the Report were adopted *en bloc* what would be the position of the Secretary of State for India or of the Prime Minister? In 1901 the Prime Minister expressed the opinion that the Army Corps system was admirably contrived and the hope that the scheme would be carried out, and pointed to the then Secretary of State for War as one of the greatest reformers that had been known in this House. It was somewhat extraordinary that upon the findings of a new Report all that should be reversed, the Secretary of State for India thrown over, and the new Secretary of State for War hailed as the only saviour of the Army. Who was to guarantee that the new scheme would not be as quickly reversed as its predecessor? The more one examined that scheme the more one hesitated to adopt it. Boldness and wisdom were not interchangeable terms. The scheme was marked by much boldness, but its wisdom was open to question. In the new order of things each member was to control a particular Vote or Votes. In the present Estimates there was no evidence of that duty of control having been assigned to this or that particular member; on the contrary, the Votes were framed on the old lines, and there was not that subdivision of duties and labour which might have been expected had the new scheme been really in operation. In the working of the new War Office Council more would depend upon its being carried out *con amore* than upon any other factor. The last War Office Council was never worked as such a Council ought to be between civilians and soldiers. It might also be said that there was not that clearness of division of duties between the old Army Corps scheme and the new proposals. The country was to be divided into five instead of six districts, with seven subordinate districts, and nineteen districts subordinate to the seven; and there would necessarily be the multiplication of correspondence and the continual references from district to district, from subordinate to superior, which went on under the old process. One of the main objections urged against the Army Corps system was that the numbers provided for were in excess of the numbers required. But as there was practically no reduction of numbers under the present scheme, it was in that respect no better than its predecessor. With regard to the linked battalion system he had always differed from the views of his right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean. The right hon. Baronet last night was very jubilant over the disappearance of that system, and in support of his views quoted the names of Lord Wolseley, Sir Ian Hamilton, and the Adjutant-General. In the Report of the War Commission, however, the one piece of evidence bearing on the linked battalion system was as follows—

> "We do not get value for money by our regimental depôts. At some of them very few recruits are raised, and the staff is idle a great part of the year; the decision to put an end to such a state of things would have a good effect, we should save money and improve our organisation. . . . To the mind of the economist it seems a cheaper plan to have these reservoirs in the shape of large depôts rather than in the shape of battalions, but these great depôts will not work well. We want to send a man abroad fully trained and disciplined, and this he can never be converted into at any ordinary depôt. If there be 700, 800, or 900 rank and file at the depot, it will require as many officers to get it in a healthy state and effectively train the men for the annual foreign draft as would be required for an ordinary battalion. In my opinion, shared by those who have in recent years served at the War Office, our present system of a battalion at home for every one abroad, is the simplest and best, if military efficiency be the great object in view. . . . Our internal military history for the past twenty-five years has in every way demonstrated the wisdom of those who in 1870 proclaimed this principle as the keystone of the arch supporting the new military organisation then introduced."

Those words were taken from a memorandum written by Lord Wolseley when Commander-in-Chief in 1897.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): Then he has contradicted himself.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he had been unable to find the contradiction; and in any case, the views there expressed were in agreement with the opinions of every Secretary of State for War since Lord Cardwell, and of every Commander-in-Chief and general officer commanding who had held office during the last ten or twelve years.

That no statement as to the needs of the Army should have been put forward was a remarkable omission from the statement of the Secretary of State. A reformed Defence Committee had been in existence for nine or ten months, and one of the first things they should have considered in view of the Estimates was the number of men to be retained by the country. From the War Commission Report and various statements made since some idea could be formed as to the number of men that ought to be kept up by the country. In his evidence before the Commission Lord Wolseley said it was perfectly possible that an invasion or raid might be made upon this country by a force of 150,000 men. He laid down as sufficient to meet this force 100,000 Regulars, 50,000 Militia, and 100,000 Volunteers. In the debate of 1901 the present Chief Secretary for Ireland laid down as the requirements for the Colonies nineteen battalions for a Colonial garrison, four battalions for Egypt, and fourteen for South Africa. These, together with transport and artillery, made up a total of 58,000 men. The requirements of India were 75,000 and this made up the total requirements for abroad, India, and home 233,000 men. They had to add a certain proportion for staff and so forth and allowing for that upon a 10 per cent. basis they got a force of 260,000 men. What did the Secretary of State for War propose to maintain under the present scheme? The total number laid down as necessary was 288,000, of whom 14,000 were Colonial and native troops. Therefore they could, without endangering the safety of this country, reduce the present forces at home in infantry by 16,000 men. If they took the ordinary cost of the infantry soldier at £60 that would give a saving of something like £1,000,000. That might not be considered a great sum, but it would at any rate be a beginning. At present the Militia were down to 75,000 men, and if Lord Wolseley's statement that they did not require more than 50,000 in case of invasion provided they laid down a higher standard, was correct then the Militia with safety might be reduced to 55,000 men. Upon those items alone they might effect a saving of at least £2,000,000 a year upon the Army Estimates. With regard to the Auxiliary Forces the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean said last year that if they wished to bring the Volunteers and Yeomanry up to a higher standard of efficiency they should tell them what they were expected to do. At the present time they were ignorant of their duties they would have to undertake in case of an invasion of this country. The difficulty arose not because encouragement was not given to the Auxiliary Forces by the War Office, but because the wrong sort of encouragement was given them, and they were not instructed in their duties and were not told what would be expected of them in case they were wanted for active service. He had ventured to put forward what he believed to be practical ideas in connection with these Estimates and he hoped some notice would be taken of them in the reply from the Front Treasury Bench.

*MR. PEEL (Manchester, S.) said they had heard various expressions of opinion from the other side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean objected to the Estimates because the Government would not pledge themselves to the adoption of the Report of the Committee. They had heard a different opinion from the hon. Member opposite, who objected generally to the Report of the Committee and he was ready to censure the Government very strongly if they took so bold a course as to put the whole of the Report into force. He thought the hon. Member for Bristol had taken more of a Party view than the right hon. Gentleman opposite, for he went back over what he called ten disastrous years and told of the number of changes effected by Orders in Council with reference to the organisation of the Army, and in that respect he had some sympathy with him. Anyone who read a considerable portion of the War Commission Report would get up with a very confused idea of the history of the different War Office Councils, which succeeded each other with almost overwhelming confusion. Then there was another difference of opinion amongst hon. Gentlemen opposite in regard to the linked battalion system. The right hon. Baronet opposite trampled on the system, whereas the hon. Member opposite argued that it would be far more expensive to establish these depôts so much favoured by Army reformers and by the Secretary of State for War. Not content with this difference of opinion they dragged in Lord Wolseley's views on the linked battalion system, each claiming him as their champion. He confessed that he had much sympathy with the position of the Secretary of State for War in this matter. He stood between two worlds, the old world of chaos, and what he hoped would be the new world of organisation. He thought the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, many of whose criticisms he agreed with, was rather severe upon the Secretary for War in the demands he made for immediate changes in the War Office.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he demanded a definite pledge as to what the new system was to be.

*MR. PEEL said he supposed his right hon. friend referred to both Part I. and Part II. of the Report.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: Yes, and more especially to the Army Corps system.

*Mr. PEEL said that the right hon. Baronet answered his own Question in another part of his speech, because he asked whether the Army Corps system was to be abandoned, and then he told them that the Corps had never existed. In that case he failed to see how they could be abandoned. He was himself in some doubt as to the position of the Army Corps, and it was clear that three of them never came into existence at all. The right hon. Baronet had criticised the signing of these Estimates and the responsibility the Army Council must have for them. He thought their responsibility must be very limited in the case of the first Estimates, because it was an official act which they must perform. He supposed really they ought not to have had the signature of the present Secretary for War, but it would have looked a little odd if the Secretary of State for India had appended his name to them. The right hon. Gentleman discussed the relations of the general staff with the staff of the Defence Committee, and his lamentations were shared by his hon. friend behind him; and he said he was afraid that the duties of the general staff would be to some extent infringed upon and might be overshadowed by this Committee of Defence which was to be set up. The general staff would receive reports from the Army and the Navy, and this would be the channel through which the reports would come to the Defence Committee, and, therefore, they might alter the tone of those reports in the way they presented those matters to the Defence Committee. There might be something in that, but, on the other hand, he did not know whether the right hon. Baronet remembered that on the Committee of Defence there would be representatives of the War Office and the Admiralty, and those representatives would be able to place their views before the Committee of Defence. There must be some other co-ordinating body besides this general staff of the Army which only dealt with the defence of this country, offensive schemes, and the question of the Colonies. They must have some other body which would co-ordinate the schemes of the Navy and the War Office and India as well.

A good deal of criticism had been brought to bear upon the statement of the Prime Minister that Part I. of the Report had not been accepted. He did not know in what sense that statement was made. They had a statement last year from the Prime Minister that certain Chilian ships were not going to be bought by the Admiralty, but they were subsequently bought. He interpreted that statement made by the right hon. Gentleman in the same sense as his previous statement. It seemed to him that substantially the principles laid down in the Report were already accepted. They had secured the substitution of the Army Council, the abolition of the Commander-in-Chief, and the appointment of an Inspector-General. These three facts really represented the leading principles in the Report of the Committee. He supposed that the Secretary for War went as far as he possibly could in saying that he had every belief that the recommendadions of the Committee would be adopted *en bloc.* He quite agreed with the hon. Member opposite that there were many details, especially with regard to finance, in the new suggestions which must require very careful criticism, and therefore, however much the right hon. Gentleman might agree with the general principles, he could not say with confidence that they would be adopted until there had been a very careful consideration of the relations of the financial part of the scheme to the changes which were to be made. So far as he knew they had no estimate of whether the new scheme would be cheaper than the previous scheme. The Secretary for War had stated that we had never yet established the crucial aim or object for which the Army existed. That was a matter which even still could hardly be absolutely established. We knew pretty well what establishments we required for our Colonies and for India. He did not say that opinion was settled, but opinion was crystallising round the size of the expeditionary force that must be always ready. What we did not know as yet was what the strength of the force for actual home defence should be. Nor did he see how a clear idea of that force could be formed until we knew what was to be the re-organisation of the Auxiliary forces. A Commission was now sitting on a portion of that question, mainly, he thought, on the question of the supply of officers, and they could not decide the force that would be required for home defence until they had settled clearly what was the amount of work and training to be required from the Auxiliary forces.

In regard to the reduction in the Estimates, they must look not merely at the amount, but also at the tendency. It was certainly a matter of congratulation that for the first time for many years in the history of the Army and Navy a certain amount of reduction had been secured in the Estimates.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): Where has the reduction taken place in the Navy Estimates?

***Mr. PEEL** said there was an apparent reduction. The reduction in the Army Estimates was not altogether very satisfactory if they looked at it in another way. This was a reduction on balance, and the reductions that had been effected were reductions in non-recurring expenditure, whereas the increases amounting to £1,370,000 were on annual recurrent expenditure. They had only to look at the statement of the Secretary for War to see that these were increases in the expenditure which would not only be permanent, but would themselves increase. There was first of all the increase in the amount paid to the Reserves, and the increased pay to the Army which would be a further charge this year. Then there was also the increased charge for the garrison in South Africa. He should like to know whether the Secretary of State considered that the number of men we had at present in the garrison in South Africa should be the limit of what we must have there, or whether it was a garrison which in subsequent years might be reduced. The Secretary of State also foreshadowed, in connection with the Estimates of next year and the year after in respect of guns and re-armament, that there must be a considerable increase in expenditure, so that though the tendency indicated by the saving of £280,000 was good he did not think they could congratulate themselves very much upon it. In regard to recruiting he was disappointed to hear that the Secretary of State was not satisfied with the quality of the recruits. Those who had followed this subject knew that several changes were brought into the method of recruiting last year. The change in connection with obtaining characters for recruits had been, he was glad to say, thoroughly approved by the Inspector-General of Recruiting, who stated in his report that though there was at first some falling off in the number of recruits that falling off soon picked itself up again, and that, on the whole, he believed a better class of recruits would be produced by obtaining a certificate of character which would satisfy those who were joining the Army that they would not at least meet bad characters when in barracks. It was too soon yet to say what would be the effect on recruiting of the increased pay, but looking to the number of recruits for six or eight years they could probably not expect to get more than 40,000 in the year. Under the scheme put forward by the late Secretary of State for War it was assumed that in order to supply the drafts for India and to bring up the Reserve something between 175,000 and 200,000 men would be required, and that it would be necessary to obtain at least 50,000 recruits a year. It did not appear that men when going into the Army were very much interested in the pay they would receive two years hence, but perhaps the knowledge of the increased pay had not filtered down to the classes who naturally might be expected to be interested in it. If 40,000 recruits were as high a number as they could expect, that entirely upset the calculation of the late Secretary of State for War both as to Indian drafts and the supply of the Reserve, and made the question of the drafts for India a very serious one. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on having begun at the right end of the business with the re-organisation of the War Office, and with the redivision and repartition of the duties of that office which had been far too long a sort of "Aunt Sally" to be attacked on every platform.

*Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) said this House was placed in a position with reference to these Estimates unparalleled in the history of Parliament. Never unless under stress of European complication or prospective war, had any Minister come down to this House and asked for a blank cheque for £29,000,000, for that was really the position in which they found themselves to-day. The Secretary of State for War presented these Estimates, and on his own admission they had not even the semblance of accuracy with regard to the scheme which was looming in the distance. These Estimates were based on a scheme of Army reform which had been repudiated and condemned by the Cabinet, by the Secretary of State for War, and by the Committee of investigation. He hoped that before going into Committee they would have a statement from the Prime Minister, otherwise the whole proceedings in Committee would be very much in the nature of a farce. The proper course would be to have a Vote on account, so that the Government could have time to have settled convictions on the question of Army reform. On the question of the Volunteers, after what had been said by the Secretary for War to the Westminster Volunteers the other day, he was convinced, after twenty-five years experience, that the War Office did not understand the Volunteer force. Nor did the right hon. Gentleman, with all his desire to do the best he could for that force, understand the position of matters. He always had the opinion that the late Commander-in-Chief took the wrong view of what was to be expected of the Volunteers, and the result of the regulations brought into play had been seen in the diminished force. They were to make it their aim to get as many men as they could to go through a course of training, but they could not expect to get the same service for £6 a year in a Volunteer as they paid £60 for in a Regular. This country ought to have a small Army able to do anything, and go anywhere, and as many Volunteers as possible for home defence with a groundwork of training which could be perfected when necessity arose. He hoped the Secretary for War would turn his attention to the matter. Much more serious dangers were likely to arise from the new procedure introduced by the Secretary for War, whereby Estimates were submitted to the House which, on the face of them, were not true Estimates. The Secretary for War did not attempt to justify the amount of nearly £29,000,000 he asked for in these Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, when introducing his Budget in 1896, said that the great question the House and country ought to consider was whether our expenditure was not increasing faster than the capacity of the country to bear it. That was called the £100,000,000 Budget, but the expenditure on the Army was then only £18,000,000. The same right hon. Gentleman, speaking in his own constituency in the same year, said he wondered whether the Commander-in-Chief himself would tell the country that we got an adequate return for the £18,000,000 spent on the Army. That same question he would put to-day—Did we get an adequate return for the £29,000,000 which the right hon. Gentleman proposed to spend next year on the Army? That was an increase of £11,000,000 in nine years—during the reign of the present Government. How long was the House to allow this increase of expenditure to go on without protest? The war expenditure in South Africa had blunted their susceptibilities as to the true proportion of expenditure. The public mind had been vitiated, and it had not been able to realise the effect of the present enormous Estimates. He suggested that provisional Estimates for the different service departments should be considered by the House and that then it should have an opportunity of considering the whole expenditure in gross. The national danger before the country was that in considering Estimates in detail, the House had no opportunity until the Budget of realising what the gross expenditure amounted to. He was sure the House would support the right hon. Gentleman with his scheme of Army reform if it was a good one, but they must know what it was, and that information they were entitled to have before going into Committee.

Sir CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) said that the War Office had shown considerable adaptability in this matter.

They were like the editor who was prepared to reverse the policy of his paper in twenty-four hours. No doubt a certain amount of soreness had accrued from the stipulations in the first part of the Report of the Royal Commission. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War might, of course, say that you cannot make omelettes without breaking eggs and that a reformer was never in favour; but he could not understand how in the reform of the War Office the soldiers had been taken and the permanent officials left. He was glad that something had been done with the Finance Department, for they all knew that that Department, with the Treasury, was the original cause which had thwarted every attempt at reorganisation for the last twenty years. That was proved by the statement made by Sir Henry Brackenbury as to what happened in 1889. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the reduction of expenditure he had effected, although, as the right hon. Baronet opposite had said, that was more apparent than real. He was glad that the Secretary for War had taken into his serious consideration the question of the Militia. Surely it was time that something should be done for that force, which was below its nominal strength and had neither transport nor guns. It was not going too far to say that the Militia, as a force, was a patent and recognised fraud. He called attention to the enormous amount of money spent unnecessarily by the Quartermaster-General's department. Troops were moved from one end of the Empire to another quite unnecessarily. The 7th Dragoon Guards were quartered in 1902 in South Africa, and moved that year to India; and this year they had been sent back to South Africa. The expenses of this unnecessary movement of a whole regiment of cavalry 3,000 miles must have been very considerable. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Forest of Dean was a little hard on the Government in regard to the re-arming of the Artillery. The Germans re-armed their artillery, and the Italians half their artillery, four years ago, and both the guns were absolutely unsuccessful. The only nation in the world that had a good quick-firing gun was the French, and they took good care not to let foreigners know the mechanism of that gun. If our Government had organised quick-firing guns four years ago, the probability was that we would have had to re-arm our artillery now at great additional expense.

The War Office were going to reorganise the regimental officers and the subalterns. General Sir Ian Hamilton and the other generals at the War Office appeared to forget that they had been once subalterns themselves; they imagined that they had always been generals. The extraordinary expense to which these officers were put for the remarkable and wonderful change of kit and uniform absolutely went for nothing. It appeared to the bright official of the War Office that the guard of the sword should be brass instead of steel. That was rather expensive, but subsequently it was ordered that the guards should be again changed to the former metal. He thought it would astonish the hon. Gentleman if he read a list of the changes which had been made in the officers' uniforms in the last few years. Swords were twice changed. In 1880 badges collar to shoulders were altered to gold shoulder cords; roll collars were abolished, and the stand up collar was introduced. In 1881 the facings were changed and stiff caps were introduced in substitution for the cheesecutter. In 1886, field service caps were introduced and two years later miniature medals were abolished. In 1893 red serge was abolished, and the sword was worn outside, whilst in 1895 an order substituted blue serge for red, with the sword worn inside. In 1898 Sam Brown was introduced and blue patrol was cast out; brown leggings were substituted for black and the roll collar was re-introduced in place of gold shoulder cords. In 1901 the collar was again altered, blue frock coats were introduced, buttons were 2½ wider and sashes were allowed round the waist; drab great coats gave place to grey coats, naval caps gave way to field service caps, belts were altered, and drab serge and medals were re-introduced. Then in 1903 the drab serge coats and badges were again altered. Surely the gentleman who suggested all these alterations might now rest on his laurels. Even if the War

Office kept on this individual they surely need not carry out all the recommendations which he suggested. He (Sir C. Rasch) had great sympathy with what Thackeray said in the Book of Snobs, that one ought to be paid to understand the reason of this useless expense and tomfoolery on uniforms. A subaltern was only paid 6s. 6d. a day, and therefore he had very little money with which to alter the details of his dress every other year.

It seemed to him quite useless to build a model hall in Parliament Street in order to reorganise the War Office when the Army could not get the money it required. The plan produced by the Secretary of State last year was not a success; the men were not forthcoming, and how the present Secretary of State was to get them Heaven only knew; he did not. 103,000 men were wanted every seven years and it was rather difficult to know what should be done. He himself did not believe that the difficulty was insoluble. There was, however, no comparison between this country and foreign countries because every other country except America had a conscript army and America had not to keep 80,000 men in the tropics. Lord Wolseley had suggested a good way out of the difficulty, and that was to pay recruits the average wages of the working classes. That was all very well but it was very expensive. The only effective way would be to reduce the men with the colours and increase the men on the Reserve. A man with the colours cost £60 a year; a man in the Reserve £9. If, as the right hon. Gentleman said, the active Army was to be kept out of the country, and if the defence of the United Kingdom was to be entrusted to the Reserve forces, why not increase the latter and decrease the former. In that way it would be possible to pay the men more, and to get the right stamp of man. If they went on as at present the Army would be in a similar position to that in which the Prince of Montenegro found his Army. He had to disband it because there were more junior officers than privates.

Mr. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green) said he wished to direct attention to grievances from which they in Ireland suffered, and for which they had failed to get any satisfactory or sympathetic reply. He did not hold the present Secretary for War responsible for those grievances, which he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would now remove. There were in Ireland a large number of ordnance workshops which, however, he was sorry to say were employed in repairing articles sent across from this country. He was happy to state that in the evidence given before the Committee the commander of the forces in Ireland took a different line, and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman to give effect to the recommendations contained in that evidence. His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught was of opinion that the work could be done in the ordnance workshops of Ireland cheaper and better than elsewhere, and that such a thing would not only benefit the people of Ireland but also the Army. At the present time Ireland was asked to organise an International Exhibition under the patronage of the King, but what was the use of attempting to resuscitate the industries of Ireland when benefits of this kind were denied her. Let the right hon. Gentleman open the ordnance workshops that existed in Ireland at the present time as workshops and not keep them as storehouses for things required for the Army which were sent from England. Ireland had to contribute a considerable sum towards the upkeep of an Army which she did not require, and it was only fair and just that some return should be made by opening the ordnance factories for the manufacture of stores and thus carry out the suggestions of His Royal Highness, in whose opinion, as given before the Committee, the needs of an Army district should be supplied as far as possible by the district itself. If the right hon. Gentleman carried out that suggestion he would earn the sympathy of the Irish artisans and those who represented them in this House. He would not now further occupy the time of the House but would reserve his right to deal with these matters when the Estimates were before the Committee. He hoped it would not be necessary to exercise that right, but that the right hon. Gentleman would see that justice was done. Only recently in the right hon. Gentleman's own constituency he visited a boot factory and was told in answer to an inquiry he made that the present conditions of the War Office made it impossible for Irishmen to compete for Army contracts for the reason that all goods manufactured in Ireland had to go to Woolwich for examination, which not only entailed considerable expense but in many cases contributed to the deterioration of the article manufactured. He suggested that to meet this case examination depôts should be opened in Ireland where the goods supplied by Irish competitors could be examined by officers appointed for that purpose. Such a reform would be of great benefit and would give employment to a great number of people in that country.

*COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's Hanover Square) said he felt some difficulty in discussing the Estimates because not only had the House the Estimates themselves and the Memorandum of the Secretary of State in explanation of them, but they also had a Report of the reconstitution of the War Office Committee which had been approved and adopted by the Government, a second Report which had been approved but not adopted by the Government, and they were promised a third which had neither been approved nor adopted. He noticed the Memorandum showed a reduction in the number of men, but unfortunately, that was not a reduction made with a view to economy, but a reduction which was due to the simple fact that the Army were unable to obtain a sufficient number of recruits. That was a most unsatisfactory condition of things in face of the hopes that were entertained of a considerable influx of recruits as a result of the improved conditions of service and pay, which were introduced last year by the late Secretary of State for War. One of the reasons why we did not get the number of recruits required undoubtedly was the bad barrack accommodation in many parts of the country, and another was that the recruit, who was a growing lad requiring all the nourishment he could get, did not get so much food as the trained soldier. Some of our barracks were in such a condition that no self-respecting working man would go into them, and until the barracks were improved recruits would not be forthcoming. The messing allowance would also have to be improved, and it was much to be regretted when the additions to the pay were made that in the case of the recruit the money was not withheld and food given to him instead. The growth of the Army Reserve would be very satisfactory if it were a real Reserve, but he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State who, in a speech at Liverpool recently, pointed out that the Reserve was not a real Reserve at all. A Reserve should be supplemental to and not take the place of the first line of defence. What happened in 1899, when it became necessary to mobilise the Army and call upon the Reserve? After taking out those men who were not fit for service abroad it was found that the strength of the Army and Reserves together was 14,000 men less than that of the Army on a peace footing.

With regard to the adoption of the first part of the Report of the Reconstitution Committee, he might say he had known the War Office for forty years, and, whatever the changes made, so far as he could see it remained the same thing. The Army Board had disappeared, and in its place was the Army Council. The Commander-in-Chief was replaced by the Inspector-General. The Six Army Corps were about to disappear and in their place was to be one Army Corps and five Commanders-in-Chief, and he really could not see there was much difference in the main in these alterations that had been made in the different branches of the War Office. According to page 10 of the Estimates, the total estimated expenditure for the Army, including amounts provided for in the Civil Service and Revenue Department Estimates, amounted to £29,324,180. He did not know whether it was possible to reduce any of those Estimates by any large sum, but there was one item to which he specially desired to call attention, viz., Stationery and Printing, £140,000. It would probably be news to some Members to learn that there were 145 volumes of Army Regulations alone, 350 different forms of Army books, and over 2,500 different forms. If the Secretary of State could effect considerable reductions in this direction he would do great service. The establishment of the Yeomanry was put down at

28,114 as against 35,196 for last year, but there was nothing in the Memorandum to show whether that reduction was caused by the action of the War Office or by inability to obtain the number of men required. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would afford whatever information he could on these points.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.), referring to the abolition of the ancient post of Judge Advocate-General, under which the British soldier obtained protection in the highest Court of appeal through which he could ventilate his grievances, said he had never been able to find any reason for that abolition except that of effecting a cheese-paring economy. The present was not a time for suggesting any large expenditure, but there was such a thing as buying cheapness too dearly. All would admit that military punishments were often altogether disproportionate to the nature of the offences committed by soldiers as compared with the punishments inflicted upon civilians. He did not, however, base his argument on any special grievance in connection with the working of the department. What he contended was that the House should be very careful to retain its authority over the administration of military law. He had not a word to say against the right hon. Judge now at the head of the department. Sir Francis Jeune was a Judge of the highest capacity, but, from the absorbing nature of his usual occupation, it was evident that he could have little leisure to bestow upon this undoubtedly complicated business. The post of Judge Advocate-General was not a sinecure. Courts-martial were, after all, only bodies of amateurs, whose proceedings from time to time required most careful and detailed examination by a well-paid, highly-placed Minister of the Crown, to whom appeals could be made in all cases of dispute, before whom matters of argument could be raised in Parliament, and through whom this House would retain and exercise its constitutional authority over the administration of military law. It would doubtless be a great comfort to right hon. Gentlemen opposite to hear a word of praise in connection with their operations. The Army Medical Department was in excellent condition, the credit for which was due chiefly to the late Secretary of State for War and the present occupant of the office. At the examination prior to the introduction of the new regulations not a single candidate put in an appearance, whereas at the last examination there were nearly three times as many candidates as appointments—men of the highest class, of good education, and to whom the health of the soldiers could be entrusted with perfect confidence. At the examination for promotion the examiner declared that he had hardly ever known papers of such ability to be written by candidates. But with that praise there was a word of warning to be uttered. The present excellent arrangements should not be tinkered with. There had been excellent arrangements before, but by alterations, tinkerings, and worrying restrictions, the basis on which the popularity of the service was built up had been destroyed. It was to be greatly regretted that the Director-General had been removed from his place on the Army Board. To be called in merely for consultation or to give evidence was a very different thing from being a member of the Board. As he had said, the present arrangements were excellent and the flow of candidates in every way satisfactory, but any attempt to alter or interfere with the settled arrangements would shatter the whole fabric of success and bring about that reaction of insincerity and discomfort which had so often upset the good working of Army reform.

With regard to recruiting, to get the necessary men the War Office must do one of two things. They must either pay more or revert to that system which was foreign to the sympathies of the British people, namely, conscription. Sir T. Kelly-Kenny in his evidence on the South African War gave his opinion in favour of conscription. One or two medical officers of high position gave it as probable that if the present condition of things went on, they would have to have recourse to that system of conscription which he was sure they would all deplore. Still more serious was the physical deterioration of the recruits. At Manchester the rejections amounted to 40 per cent., and the recruits enlisted were not of a very high character. Those who knew the Army and remembered the kind of men they got in former years, would agree that physically the standard of the recruits was lower than it ought to be. He hoped the Government would push on with their Committee on Physical Deterioration, and he trusted that eventually they would have a Royal Commission, which would enable them to find out whether they were deteriorating as a nation or only going down in physical efficiency on account of some temporary causes. The Army at the present time was evidently unpopular among the recruits, for there was a large number of deserters. Very early in the service, recruits showed their dislike for the conditions and discomfort to which they were subjected, and very shortly after joining the colours many of them concluded that they were better off out of the service. The question of the barracks was a very important one, and so was the place in which they took recruits to be examined. If hon. Members could only see the dirty and uncomfortable conditions under which the examination of recruits was carried out at Wellington Barracks they might well exclaim, "Abandon hope all ye who enter here." Another matter of importance was the withholding from the recruits the messing allowance giving to the ordinary soldier. If there was one class of persons more than another who required to be fed up it was the recruit with no stamina, who was plunged into trying surroundings which were a great strain upon his brain and body, and under the stress of which he was bound to run down and deteriorate unless he was well fed. He hoped his hon. friend would continue to bring this question before the House until he got the very reasonable concession that the recruit should be as well or even better fed than the regular soldier. They wanted to make the service a little more attractive, and something would have to be done to make it more popular if they wished to draw the unskilled labourer into the Army. They should improve the conditions of the recruits and carry out the very sensible advice of his hon. friend by giving the recruit that amount of good nourishment which would enable him to efficiently carry on his work.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham) said that he heard with profound regret the speech of the Leader of the Opposition last night. He could not help thinking that some of the references of the right hon. Gentleman to the work of the War Office Reconstitution Committee were couched in language which was unduly hard, and might almost be considered ungracious. This Committee was, after all, composed of very distinguished men, and they had been carrying out a task surrounded with very great difficulties, and they had done that task with courage not only of thought but of action. Therefore he thought the Leader of the Opposition, who he was glad to see in his place, was rather severe in his comments upon the manner in which the Committee had discharged their duties. After all, there were other things in the world besides the manner in which things were done, and although the procedure of the Committee might have been unusual and unprecedented and their tone a little peremptory, that ought not to diminish the value of their Report and of the services they had rendered in the eyes of the public. It must be remembered that when the Committee was appointed they had had three years of Army administration by the present Secretary for India. The House would remember what those three years brought forth. In the first year, when this great scheme was produced with a flourish of trumpets it was hailed, like every scheme of Army reform was hailed, with applause and rapture by the daily newspapers. It was quite true that the question was dealt with in this House, but the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India, by his Parliamentary skill and the support he received, was able to carry all before him the first year. But when the second year came round it was found that the scheme did not provide the men and there were no signs of the men being forthcoming. The conditions of enlistment were altered and the pay of the soldier was substantially raised, and both these expedients had only one object and that was to get more men. It was thought that they would get more men by asking them to serve for only three years, but all these expedients failed; at the end of the second year the failure of the scheme was apparent. The House knew perfectly well how they got through the third year. The Army debates were a little more animated than this one, and he might safely predict that the right hon.

Gentleman who now represented the War Office would not be exposed to so much criticism from all quarters as his predecessor was. He did not put the whole responsibility of those three years upon that right hon. Gentleman. The Cabinet were responsible with him, and the Prime Minister was absolutely as responsible as he was. He noticed that the Prime Minister was now on the side of Army reform. He made a speech in which he said that they did not want a large Regular Army for home defence, and after this he published a second Report which was written in strong terms of censure of all that had been done during the last three years. One would almost have thought that he had had nothing to do with it, but there was no one more formidable than the right hon. Gentleman himself, and there was not a single item in the whole Army administration in the three last years which the right hon. Gentleman had not made it his business to defend and extol. What was the condition of the Army at the end of those three years? They all knew that its cost was nearly £29,000,000, an increase of a most striking character with which the House was quite familiar. The Secretary for War was glad last night to be able to boast of a small reduction this year in the normal expenditure, but as a matter of fact it was a small reduction on the highest year's expenditure known. The hon. Member for Manchester had shown how illusory some of the reductions were and how gloomy were the prospects for the future.

The Army Corps scheme had been found by the Committee to be absolutely unsuited to the needs of the country, and the Army Corps themselves were officially found to be non-existent. The Report of the Committee stated that they saw no object in attempting to organise additional Army Corps which in no reasonably probable circumstances would be required, or used as such, if they existed otherwise than on paper. He remembered a certain White Paper issued last year which showed three Army Corps completely equipped for war and a fourth to be ready on 1st April. Now they learnt from the Reconstitution Committee's Report that these Army Corps never existed except on the White Paper. It was also found that the recruiting was quite inadequate to the number of battalions for that scheme, and also for the right hon. Gentleman's scheme of which they knew so little. It was quite clear that the increase of pay and the altered conditions in the Army, though costly to the nation, had not tapped any new sources for recruiting, while they had injured recruiting for the Guards when it was desired to increase the Guards battalions. He ventured to point out last year that although a bounty of £3 per head had been paid to the Militia, involving an expenditure of £300,000 a year, the force was smaller than before, and that to all intents and purposes this amount had been expended by the taxpayer for no return whatever. The right hon. Gentleman went to Manchester and said the Militia were being murdered. If it took £300,000 a year to murder them it was the most expensive act of homicide on record. He remembered that the Prime Minister alluded to the great Militia Reserve. That Reserve had been practically non-existent, and now his right hon. friend came down to the House and said this experiment was undesirable, and that it would be discontinued. The House had heard the sorrowful tale of the Volunteers, who were to be reduced until they reached 250,000, but who had now sunk to about 240,000. He thought the House and the country ought to realise that the British Army was at the present time in a very unsatisfactory and even alarming condition. He welcomed the admission the Secretary of State had the courage to make last night to that effect, but whatever the condition of the Army at present it was threatened with much greater danger and difficulty in the immediate future. How would the reliefs for India be provided, if the new short service men would not undertake to extend their term? It was in the face of these conditions that Lord Esher's Committee was hurriedly called together and set upon its course of work. In considering the Report of that Committee hon. Members should bear in mind these circumstances.

It was very difficult for private Members to form a just and well-considered opinion upon a large constructive scheme of reform. Difficulties could be pointed out in the working of any scheme; it was easy to show where there had been failures and miscalculations, and they must be able to indicate the direction in which they ought to move to repair these miscalculations, but it was hardly in their power to give an authoritative opinion on a great new scheme. He confessed that he was favourably predisposed towards the Report of the Committee, because it was encouraging for what it condemned, what it left untouched, and what it provided. It condemned the whole system of Army organisation and War Office control, and in condemning that system it bore out much that had been said by hon. Members on both sides of the House. It cleared the ground by consigning to the limbo of the past all the old costly apparatus of extravagance and inefficiency against which they had so long inveighed. There was nothing in the Report about the size and cost of the Army. That was outside the province of the Committee altogether. That was a matter on which hon. Members would have much to say. There was nothing in the scheme, so far as he was able to understand, to prevent large reductions both of men and money. The Committee had nothing to do with the organisation of the Army, and they did not attempt to regulate recruiting, or the periods of service, or the way in which the reliefs for foreign service were to be conducted. All that was in the province of the right hon. Gentleman. It was quite true that the Committee assumed that the linked battalion system would be abolished, and in his view that was a wise and salutary assumption. He agreed with his right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean that they would never be able to make large reductions in the cost of the Army unless they did away with the idea that they must have unnecessary battalions at home for every battalion their Empire abroad called upon them to keep. The Committee had left all these questions untouched, but they provided in time of peace a much more harmonious system of governing those troops which the House of Commons might think it necessary to keep in this country. He believed it was a more efficient and rational system for checking the expenditure of the money which this House was pleased to vote. He did not pretend to criticise this Report. It was quite impossible that any great scheme of reform could command agreement in every detail. It would be quite easy to find lots of subjects for criticism and censure in it if one were so disposed. He thought that at this stage they should take the Report as a whole. For his part he should require to be very carefully reassured that the position of the Secretary of State for War, under the new arrangements, was not in any way impaired, because that Minister was the supreme authority and civilian representative in this House. He was sure that the House as a whole and the country would be desirous that the Government should move forward in the direction indicated in this Report. He was perfectly ready to admit that technically the Government were not committed to the adoption of this Report *en bloc*, but he submitted that they were morally.

The Secretary of State for War made it pretty plain in his speech yesterday that if the scheme of reform now put forward were shelved or mutilated beyond recognition it would be very unlikely that he would continue to be responsible for the administration of the Army. He hoped he was not misinterpreting his right hon. friend. Most of all were the Government committed by the fact that they had already taken considerable steps to carry out the recommendations. The first step had involved the summary dismissal of some of the most important officers of the Army. Though he differed from the late Secretary for War on a great many points, he admitted that the right hon. Gentleman made many very excellent appointments, particularly at the War Office. Of all the appointments which the right hon. Gentleman made he supposed the best from the point of view of the Army were those of Sir W. Nicholson and Sir Ian Hamilton. He regretted, however, that it had been necessary to remove from their positions distinguished officers who could not be said to have been in any way connected with the old *régime* at the War Office. But if they were prepared to support the scheme as a whole, they ought to be ready to accept some things they did not like as well as those they liked. The dismissal of these officers, and others much humbler, pledged the Government to go on with their scheme, for it was obvious that their removal should not end in nothing being done. It could not be said that this was to be considered a tentative proceeding, and that the scheme could be put aside. To back out after having dismissed these men would be like what had been seen in a greater matter in which the Cabinet had been completely altered and transformed, and then it was said that there was no intention to revert to protection. Men could not be used like pawns in that way. He asked the Secretary for War and the Government to consider what would be the effect on the Army if it were shown that they had made a clean sweep of the most distinguished soldiers in the Army in a spirit of levity, without any real purpose lying behind such action. He knew that the Army was not at all adverse to this new scheme of reform, and many welcomed the arrival of the right hon. Gentleman at the War Office, not only for his own sake, but for the sake of the change. But, if a feeling of doubt prevailed in the Army through the removal of officers from their offices, great risk would be run of making the Army less confident in the honesty of the administration, and especially if it could be shown that generals were dismissed to tide over the exigencies of a debate on the Address, and in order to soothe the susceptibilities of a colleague in the Cabinet. Lord Roberts and Lord Wolseley had resigned their commands in bitterness and disgust, and two Secretaries of State, distinguished politicians, had served at the War Office during the same time. The record of neither Minister had greatly enhanced the position which the Government occupied in the eyes of the country, but both these gentlemen had been promoted to higher office. One was at present Secretary of State for India, and the other had succeeded the Duke of Devonshire as Leader in the House of Lords. This great disparity of treatment between the soldiers and civilians was noted by the Army. Of all men alive the Secretary for India should be the last person to interfere now in the direction of military affairs. It would be extremely undignified, and ungenerous, and improper, if he were to allow himself to be drawn into opposing the necessary steps for the reorganisation of the Army that might be taken by his successor; and he was certain that so far from the Secretary for India prejudicing the cause of reform, by any action he might take, he would only strengthen the demand for reform in the country, and draw upon himself an unpopularity which he would gladly spare him.

Though the Estimates which they were called upon to consider were described as interim, they were real Estimates all the same, amounting to £29,000,000. He understood it was not possible to hang up the Army, and cut off expenditure until the new scheme was ready, and he was not disposed to quibble and cavil at all the inconsistencies and novelties which these Estimates contained; but they embodied the same objections which might be urged against the late Estimates. Unless the Secretary for War satisfied the House that he meant to make a substantial reduction, both in men and money, from what the right hon. Gentleman called the normal cost, he at any rate would give his votes in Committee of Supply in favour of the principle of those reductions. He had no wish to embarrass the right hon. Gentleman in any way. The hon. Member for Manchester seemed to think he was desirious of embarassing the right hon. Gentleman. [Mr. PEEL: I am sure of it.] The hon. Member no doubt knew more about his motives than he himself did; but they desired, if possible, to support the right hon. Gentleman, and in so far as he moved forward in the direction of this scheme no lack of Party feeling would prevent him from giving the right hon. Gentleman the necessary support.

*MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.) said he might congratulate the hon. Member for Oldham that he had taken several hon. and right hon. Gentlemen to task for their adverse criticisms of the War Office. The hon. Member for Oldham told the House that it was very easy to criticise and very easy to destroy. He did not think any Member of the House had had an easier time of it during the last year, in which he had lived on criticisms. The hon. Member for Oldham complained of the late War Minister, and of the way in which he had carried on the affairs of the Army for the past three years. He defied the hon. Member for Oldham, or anybody else, to have succeeded with a Commander-in-Chief round his neck. [An HON. MEMBER on the MINISTERIAL Benches: Oh, oh!] He had a right to his opinion on this subject, even though he was not a Yeoman. The best step which had been taken was the quick way in which these reforms had been carried out by the Government. The best thing that had happened to the Service was the disappearance of the Commander-in-Chief, and nothing had pleased him more than the removal of Sir Ian Hamilton. Six months ago a proposal was made by the Commander-in-Chief and Sir Ian Hamilton which practically amounted to the abolition of cavalry altogether. These generals took away the lances from the Lancers, and the swords from the Hussars. He supposed that Sir Ian Hamilton was a Highlander, and the suggestion about the lances and the swords was about as sensible as if this Highlander had ordered all the Cavalry to ride in kilts. Nothing more foolish had ever been done by a Commander-in-Chief at the instigation of Sir Ian Hamilton than when it was proposed to do away with an *esprit de corps* in the Cavalry. He maintained that any men would take an enormous responsibility who went against the Report of that Committee, or threw any obstacle in the way of those who desired to carry it out. For the first time since he had been in the world the Army was going to get a chance of reconstruction, and the War Office was going to put it into a workmanlike condition.

He cordially agreed with the hon. Member for Mid Essex in what he said as to the shameful way in which changes had been made during the last two years. The khaki craze was the most senseless piece of business that he had ever known. Because the Boers fought gallantly in khaki and slouch hats was no reason for putting our soldiers into the same uniform. On a previous occasion he had pointed out that matter, and had also pointed out that he supposed if the Zulus had beaten us in earlier times we should have put our soldiers into feathers and paint. The doing away with old badges and old regimental ideals was one of the saddest things he could conceive, although possibly hon. Gentlemen opposite who had not served in a distinguished corps did not understand the *esprit de corps* which existed in these old regiments. He would like to see a different term of service for the Indian Army to that of the Home Army, and he hoped that this matter would be considered by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, and that the service Members of the House would assist the right hon. Gentleman in carrying out the recommendations of the Reconstitution Committee. He agreed that those recommendations should be carried out as nearly as possible *en bloc* and that it would be a great misfortune if they were not, and he cared not what outside criticism the hon. Member for Oldham felt called upon to make, so long as he stuck to the text that the War Office must see that the recommendations of the Committee were carried out. He desired to call attention also to the great dissatisfaction among the Reserve officers with regard to the way in which they were treated at the time of the late war. The Service Committee of the House of Commons were of the opinion that if a premium was to be put upon officers who had retired, it should be put upon those who had retired with a pension, and not upon those who had retired with a gratuity. He himself believed that officers should be retired on a pension, because then they could be laid hold of by the authorities in case of an emergency, and could always be found, but, as a matter of fact, so far as he could see, the officer who retired with a gratuity always held a much better position than his brother in arms who retired on a pension. He hoped all the service Members of the House would stand or fall by the recommendations of the Committee. When the late Secretary for War was so strongly attacked—and those who attacked him forgot that his action, after all, was hampered by the outcome of years and years of the maddest projects that were ever placed before the House—he recognised the almost herculean task of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, and congratulated him upon the fact that not only had the Committee come nearly to the end of its labours, but he congratulated the right hon. Gentleman and the Government on their pluck in acting with such promptitude and vigour on the Report of the War Office Reconstitution Committee.

* **Major SEELY** (Isle of Wight) said he wished to say a word in reply to the extraordinary attack made by the hon. and gallant Member opposite on the most distinguished living soldier we had, who could not defend himself in this House, and who was moreover a countryman of the hon. and gallant Member's. The hon. Member for Oldham had been explaining to the House that certain provisions which had been introduced by the late Secretary of State for War had not had the desired result, and was pointing out that the late Secretary of State for War had not been entirely successful. Now everbody realised how much the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India had done for the Army, although some differed from him profoundly on certain great tendencies of military rule, but everybody realised how much he had done for the Army more than his predecessors. But believing that, as they did, what could they say of the conduct of the hon. and gallant Gentleman whose complaint was that if the late Secretary of State had not done any good to the Army, could he be expected to do it with the burden of the late Commander-in-Chief round his neck. He did not believe that there was a single Member of this House who would support the hon. and gallant Member in attacking distinguished soldiers who had no opportunity of defending themselves.

Mr. O'MARA said that he had gone into the Estimates very carefully and he was sorry that stress had not been laid upon the fact that the large reductions that the Secretary of State for War had referred to on the previous evening were most of them effected on war charges and that no saving had been made on the normal charges of the Estimates. The growth of the Estimates during the last few years was appalling and deserved the attention of the House. In 1895 and 1896 the whole amount was only £18,000,000. In 1898 and 1899 they were some £20,000,000. This increase of about 30 per cent. in the Army Estimates carrying the same number of men, was a most extraordinary thing and required some consideration. There was another point. Why was it that although Estimates were passed every year for a certain establishment the numbers of the Army never came up to the establishment provided for? The Volunteers, for instance, were 100,000 below the establishment, and he would like to know what was done with the money which was provided for that 100,000 men who did not exist. Other branches of the service were also considerably under strength, and it was therefore necessary to ask when the Estimates were being considered whether there would be any saving under this head. Another point deserving of the attention of the House was the amount of the contributions made by the Colonies towards the upkeep of the Army, and he would like to see a Return, similar to that made in the case of the Navy, made in connection with the Army in this regard. The Army being kept for important purposes it was only just and right that all parts of the Empire should contribute towards its maintenance, either in proportion to its population or its wealth. Ireland was largely over-taxed according to the findings of the Financial Relations Committee, but it was pointed out that in the expenditure made in Ireland on account of the Army there was in some degree a set-off for that over-taxation, but although that was said with regard to Ireland he noticed similar expenditure was made in Canada, Halifax Nova Scotia, and other places which did not pay a single shilling towards the maintenance of the troops stationed there. Under the last Military Works Act an expenditure of £5,000,000 was authorised, and the Secretary of State in reply to a Question had expressed his inability to state how much of that sum would be spent this year. It was not fair to the House that Estimates should be brought forward from which four or five millions sterling were left completely out of account, and in view of the unsatisfactory nature of the replies he had received he should oppose these Estimates to the fullest extent allowed by the Rules of the House.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) supported the views expressed by the hon. Member for the College Green Division of Dublin with regard to Army contracts in Ireland. The complaints of the hon. Member were well founded, and in many quarters a feeling of injustice obtained. His hon. friend, representing an industrial constituency, had made a very reasonable speech, and it was very unfair that the Secretary of State for War should not have vouchsafed the least reply. If the right hon. Gentleman maintained that attitude, it would be taken as an indication of his determination not to listen to any complaints, no matter how reasonable, put forward by the Nationalist Members. One case referred to by his hon. friend related to Belfast, and surely in a matter affecting his own constituency the right hon. Gentleman might have been expected to make a statement.

*MR. SPEAKER reminded the hon. Member that the right hon. Gentleman had no right of reply in the present debate; but that he would have opportunities in Committee of answering any questions that might have been raised.

*MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he was aware that technically the right hon. Gentleman had exhausted his right to speak, but it was usual in such circumstances for Ministers, by leave of the House, to indicate that the matter which had been brought forward would receive their attention. In any case, another representative of the War Office might have spoken.

With regard to the Estimates themselves he desired to know why no provision whatever was made for the cost of the Somaliland expedition during the ensuing financial year. The House was in the extraordinary position of knowing that a war upon a considerable scale, and under circumstances of great difficulty, was being carried on, and that not a farthing had been placed on the Estimates in respect thereof. That was surely not the way in which the business of the country ought to be conducted. It was doubtless true that the exact cost could not be foretold, but it was bound to be considerable, and some provision ought to have been made to meet it. No real explanation had yet been given of why the war was being waged at all, although it had been going on for over three years. He hoped, but did not expect, that the absence of provision meant that the campaign was to be dropped. He quite understood the feeling that having suffered reverses this country was bound to go on with the war until some striking success had been achieved. Once hostilities were commenced it was difficult to bring them to a close, but in the interests of the taxpayers, particularly in Ireland, it was extremely desirable that this fruitless strife should be ended at once. If they wanted to garrison the sea-coast districts they might do it with comparatively little cost, but this idea under which General Egerton was pushing on indefinitely into the heart of this practically unknown and difficult country was a plan of campaign which could not possibly have a satisfactory ending, and was sure to lead to renewed applications for large sums of money. He was astonished at the conduct of those who were supposed to be the legitimate Opposition in this House upon this question, for he considered that the Front Opposition Bench should have insisted upon having some explanation of this campaign in Somaliland. What would have happened if a Liberal Government had been in power carrying on an aimless and endless campaign in Africa? What would the Conservative Opposition have done? They would have made this a question upon which the Government would have been pressed very hard to give an answer. Instead of the present Opposition objecting to this wholesale wasting of life and treasure, it was left for himself and a few private Members to object. He took the same attitude upon these Estimates as he did upon the Navy Estimates. It was a matter of indifference to him how much the people of this country considered it right to spend upon the Army, but if they were satisfied to squander the taxes of this country in that manner they should suffer alone. It was an outrage, a scandal, and a piece of diabolical injustice that the taxpayers of Ireland should be called upon to contribute directly or indirectly a single farthing towards the prosecution of this campaign. There was scarcely an hon. Member opposite who could give an intelligent explanation of why this campaign had been undertaken, and that being so it was absurd to assume that the people of Ireland would be satisfied with this enormous expenditure. He protested against it from the point of view of the Irish taxpayer. Ireland was in a state of extreme poverty, and her industries had gone to rack and ruin, and yet they were asked to vote these enormous sums of money. The hon. Member for Exeter asked the other day for a Return of the expenditure on the Army for the last four years, and he was told that it amounted to close upon £350,000,000 sterling. That was the sum which had been spent upon matters connected with the Army and warlike operations, during the past four years, for which they would never get any return. That ought to be sufficient to make hon. Members pause long and deeply before they sanctioned any more expenditure. When they got into Committee he would take every legitimate opportunity of protesting against this system of conducting the Army Estimates. What was the good of the Secretary of State for War making a virtue of the fact that he was proposing a decrease in the Army Estimates? It was easy to show a decrease when they did not put upon the Estimates expenditure which they knew they would have to meet. It would be found before the end of the next financial year that this campaign for nothing, and leading nowhere, in Somaliland would have to be provided for. He hoped a division would be taken, if only as a protest against the system of not putting upon the Army Estimates large sums which the Government knew would have to be spent in the coming year.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) thought the House was entitled to a reply from some official quarter to some of the criticisms made upon this Vote. It was astonishing that such a large sum of money was going to be voted—

***Mr. SPEAKER**: There is no money being voted now and that question will come on afterwards. The question before the House now is that I leave the chair.

Mr. FIELD said they had had no reply from the right hon. Gentleman in reference to the criticisms which had been made.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The hon. Member must know that I cannot speak again in this debate.

Mr. FIELD said they were bound to bring these matters forward, and if an explanation could not be given now he hoped some reply would be made when the opportunity presented itself.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 255; Noes, 153. (Division List No. 45.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt Hn Sir Michael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M.M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, Lt.-Col H F (Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt Hn J A (Glasgow
Campbell, J H M (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V C W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J A (Worc
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T R (Tower Hamlets
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Dorington, Rt Hon Sir John E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt Hon Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest

Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S. W.)
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Gordon, Hon J E (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Henry D (Shrewsbury)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J F (Sheffield, Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Howard, J (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks., N. R.)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbighs
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)

Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H E (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W J H (Dumfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt Hon. Sir Fred'rick G
Mitchell, Edw (Fermanagh, N.)
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon J Scott (Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan David J (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.- Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hon M W (Stalybridge
Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green
Rigg, Richard
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon Lionel Walter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.

Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col S G Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Saunderson, Rt. Hn Col Edw J.
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith H C (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G (Oxf'd Univ.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C.E.H (Sheff'ld
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, R. Hn. Sir William H.
Webb, Colonel William George
Wharton, Rt Hon John Lloyd
Whiteley, H (Ashton and. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks
Wodehouse, Rt Hn E R (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

Tellers for the Ayes —Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork N. E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard

Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John

Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph

Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Elibank, Master of
Ellice,Capt EC(S. Andrw'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gladstone,Rt Hn Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife,West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones,DavidBrynmor(Swansea
JonesWilliam (Carnarvonshire)
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Langley, Batty
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, SirJoseph F (Accrington
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macnamara,Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley,Rt.Hon.John(Montrose
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor,James (Wicklow, W)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, William
O'Donnell, T. Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly,James(Roscommon,N)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn C R (Northants
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen,E.)
Thomas, Sir A (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas David Alfred (Merthyr
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk Mid.
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Norton and Mr. Charles Hobhouse.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (MARINERS' VOTES).

SIR ELLIOTT LEES (Birkenhead): The subject which I am bringing before the House is a grievance which affects a great number of our citizens, but I should hardly have ventured to ask the attention of the House to it did I not believe that I can suggest a practical, though only partial remedy. So that to-night I am not merely asking the House to express the sympathy which I think all Members will feel with the disability of the bulk of the seafaring men of this country to exercise their franchise, but I hope to explain to the House a scheme by which that disability may be in many cases removed. I say that I think we all feel sympathy with men who may be on the register for the best part of their lives without ever having the opportunity, by their votes, of influencing the Government of their country. The vast majority of respectable Englishmen value very highly the power and responsibility of shaping the policy of the nation. The act of voting at an election brings home to them the fact that they belong to a self-governing nation, and in most cases (I am sorry I cannot say in all) they acquiesce readily enough in the decision of the majority, and loyally obey laws which they may themselves disapprove, knowing full well that if they can persuade the majority of their countrymen to their views these laws will be altered. The franchise is not only a great educator but also a great peacemaker. But it seems rather a mockery to grant by law a share in the Government of the country and the Empire to a large class of men under circumstances which render it certain that only a very small fraction of their numbers can avail themselves of their rights, and to do nothing by law to deal with their exceptional case. There is already legislation to meet other exceptional cases—blind, illiterates, and Jews. Taking the Board of Trade figures for 1901, the latest I can get, the total number of seamen employed in this country was 186,636, and the total number of fishermen 19,502, making a total of 206,138. Deducting 33,610 Lascars and 32,614 aliens, the figure was reduced to 139,914, which, together with 114,000 men serving in the Royal Navy and Marines, made a total of 254,000 men. It is impossible to say what proportion of these men are on the register; but if it is taken at only one in five, that represents a constituency of over 50,000 men.

In Norway there is a law of the 5th June, 1897 (amended 24th February, 1900 and 9th May, 1903) enabling Parliamentary electors, absent from the kingdom in lawful pursuits, to record their votes in writing either before departure or from a foreign place. This law has been passed in the interests of the workers in the shipping industry. This Act is meant to make the franchise effective for electors abroad, chiefly in respect of general elections, which occur regularly every three years. Dissolutions are not legal. At election time (general or by-election) lists of all electors are published by Government officials. The agents of the candidates send voting papers (and other election literature if they choose) to as many electors as they think fit; but each elector may procure a voting paper independently. On Norwegian ships abroad the masters collect the (sealed) voting papers of those on board who are electors and send these papers to the returning officer in Norway. Other electors abroad hand their papers to a Consul for forwarding. Voting before departure from Norway is effected by handing the sealed voting paper and legitimation paper to a Notary Public, who forwards the papers to the returning officer. For seamen the Superintendent of a Mercantile Marine Office fulfils this Notarial function.

It is hardly necessary, I think, to take up the time of the House by pointing out the virtues of the class on whose behalf I am pleading, and demonstrating the good qualities of our officers and seamen whether in the Navy or in the mercantile marine. We differ about many things, but I can hardly imagine there are two opinions in this House as to the splendid qualities of our naval officers or our man-o'-wars men. Those hon. Members who have travelled will probably agree that it would be difficult to speak too highly of the character, the intelligence, and the patriotism of the officers of the merchant service of this country. British seamen may have their faults, like other classes of the community who are not exposed to the same temptations, but they have been for generations the backbone of our naval and commercial supremacy, and at least we may trust them to give a manly vote. There is no cure, as many a landsman learned three years ago in South Africa, for the cynicism and lack of enthusiasm which are the curse of modern civilisation, like that of daily contact with danger, and daily comradeship with one's fellow men in times of hardship and peril, and in this sense the seaman is always on active service when he is afloat. And I would remind the House that this proposal only affects those who are on the register, and therefore entitled to vote already, were it physically possible for them to do so, and that the seamen who are on the register are probably the best of their class, and among the most deserving citizens of the community. I regret to say that I have not been able to devise any scheme by which sailors some weeks' or months' voyage distant from this country could record their votes. Any suggestion of proxy voting would, I fear be scouted by the House at the present day. I should not like tosay that it was beyond the wit of man to discover a means whereby a sailor could vote at a Consulate, and have his vote telegraphed home; we might indeed, in a Redistribution Act, allot special representatives to sailors on long voyages, and a list of candidates could be telegraphed to each Consulate and each colonial port, from which list seamen who could show a certificate that they were on the register at home might by ballot select their representatives. But though I will not say that such a scheme is beyond the wit of man, I must admit that it has proved beyond the wit of this particular man who is addressing the House at this particular moment — and although I regret that many of the best and the most deserving of their class are at present necessarily omitted from the plan I am going to explain to the House, still I do feel that a man who is many weeks distant from our shores must to a great extent be out of touch with home politics and home feeling for the time, and to that extent not so well qualified to give a right decision as those who are constantly in touch with all that is taking place here. Now there are a very large number of sea-faring men who are, or at any rate who can be if they like, constantly in touch with affairs in this country, men in the Channel trade, and in the Irish Channel trade, men in the North Sea trade, men in the North Atlantic trade, men in the Bay of Biscay trade, men in the coasting trade, and fisherman. Most of these men are constantly backwards and forwards from English ports, are constantly in touch with home opinion, and can, if they like, keep themselves nearly as well posted in what is going on here as that large class of English electors who rely almost entirely upon the weekly newspapers for their information. Now many of these men, and also a proportion of long-voyage men, will be on shore for a few days or a few weeks, perhaps, during election time, whether the election be a general, or a by-election affecting the constituency in which they have a vote. They may be deeply interested in the questions or the candidates before the constituency, and fully acquainted with all the pros and cons, and yet they may be obliged to go to sea a few days before the poll takes place. Can we not at any rate do something to remedy this grievance?

I venture to suggest that a means can easily be found for enabling all mariners who are in port between the issue of the writ and the day of the poll, to exercise their votes in advance without any proxy or fantastic voting, simply by going in person to the returning officer and personally recording their votes. I attach importance to the man personally recording his vote. We ought to insist on a little personal exertion. I suppose three things are essential in any scheme which could receive the practical legislative assent of the House, and not merely its benevolent but theoretical approval. Firstly, that the secrecy of the vote should be maintained. Secondly, that there should be careful provision against the possibility of fraud in the counting of the votes. Thirdly, that where a scrutiny is judicially ordered, and votes have to be struck off, there shall be proper means of identifying any vote which is ordered to be struck off. I venture to think that the plan I propose would fulfil all three conditions. I will try, as briefly and lucidly as I can, to explain it to the House if the House will permit me to do so. In nearly all cases it is known who the candidates will be before the writ is issued. After the writ was issued, I would require the returning officer to fix an hour at which he would daily be at his office and could receive mariners' votes. At that hour any mariner wishing to vote could attend, and give his number on the register, and claim to vote—I think he should be accompanied by another householder, not a mariner, who would by declaration or oath vouch for his identity. He would also make a declaration that he would be at sea on the day of the poll. As, before the nomination, there would be no printed ballot papers with names of candidates, the returning officer would then, as in the case of a blind or illiterate elector, or a Jew on Saturday, take the voter aside and ask him for whom he voted, and would then in his own, the returning officer's, hand write down the name of the candidate chosen on the lower half of the voting paper, would let the voter see that it was correct, and then seal it up; while on the upper half of the voting paper he would write the number on the register of the elector. The votes would be produced at the counting, still sealed, but showing on the upper part the numbers on the register, which might be inspected by the candidates and their agents, as a precaution, of course, against personation. When the agents were satisfied, the register numbers would be concealed by sealing down the upper part of the voting paper, the votes would be mixed up again, and the lower halves of the voting papers unsealed, showing the names of the candidates for whom the votes had been cast. Any of these names which were those of duly nominated candidates would then be added to their score, whilst any names which were not those of duly nominated candidates would not be counted, and the papers containing them would be destroyed. The valid papers containing the names of duly nominated candidates would be kept with the other ballot papers; and, in the event of a scrutiny, the register numbers could be unsealed and examined and votes illegally given could be identified and struck off. Except in the case of a scrutiny there would be no means of identifying the voters, as the names written on them would not be in the handwriting of the elector, but of the returning officer. Of course the returning officer knows which way the man votes, but so he does in the case of a blind voter, an illiterate voter, or a strict Jew when the poll takes place on a Saturday. For each of these, the blind, the illiterate, and the Jew, an exceptional provision has been made in the Ballot Act, in the two first cases on the grounds of physical inability to vote in the usual way, in the case of the Jew on the grounds of conscientious objection, or, if you like, of religious disability. I venture to suggest that the case of the sailor is as deserving of exceptional legislation as any of the other three. I hope I have shown that secrecy can be maintained, that fraud is rendered well-nigh impossible, and that unauthorised votes can be detected and struck off in case of scrutiny. I shall perhaps be met by the objection that the time of the returning officer will be wasted in recording votes for men who are not candidates. I do not fear that in practice there will be much of this. Surely in ninety-nine cases out of 100 it is known who the candidate will be at the time the writ is issued. I will ask the House to accept my assurance that there is no difficulty connected with the sealing and unsealing of the voting paper, a little envelope gum at each end is all that is really necessary. I could show the process to any hon. Member in a couple of minutes, but I think I had better not give a demonstration which would have the appearance of a conjuring trick in this House. What is the right hon. Baronet's Amendment? It is only the dear old wedge, whose thin end is always threatening our ancient Constitution. It is a surprise to me that it should come from the right hon. Baronet, whom I have always looked on as a progressive statesman, but as a confirmed Tory I am bound to treat the venerable bogey with respect and deference.

In reply to the right hon. Baronet, I am not prepared to deny that if this plan turns out to be an easy and practical way of recording a vote without a personal attendance on the actual day of the poll, it may be extended to other classes than sailors. If there appear on trial to be any grave objections to it, we may be sure that it will not be so extended, but if after trial in the case of sailors, it is found to work well and to be free from objection, what harm would its extension cause? I cannot see why any special virtue attaches to a vote given between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. on a particular day, and by my scheme I do require personal attendance upon some day between the issue of the writ and the actual polling day. There is nothing new, nothing unconstitutional, in allowing votes to be spread over several days. In the days of our fathers, or grandfathers at any rate, the poll used to last several days. And even at this day in Orkney and Shetland the poll lasts. But the right hon. Baronet need not assume that the case of sailors is so similar to that of other workmen that a privilege granted to them can be construed into a common right. With other workmen, on land, a great sacrifice of time and money may sometimes be necessary in order to exercise the franchise, but if they are willing to make the sacrifice there is no physical obstacle to debar them from recording their vote, With the sailors, so long as they pursue their calling at all, it is certain that the vast majority of them find personal attendance on the polling day a physical impossibility. The railway guard, after all, to take an extreme case, if he likes to sacrifice his employment and to submit to fines and penalties, can contrive to record his vote in person, but not even the absolute self-surrender of Japanese patriotism would enable a sailor who was a few leagues out at sea to leave his ship and reach his polling booth. There is a distinct and definite line between a moral and a physical impossibility. How often in their lives are other workmen compelled to be absent from the poll? How many times in their lives will soldiers on the register be prevented? I do not want to weary the House with details more appropriate to the explanation of a Bill than to that of a Motion, but I have felt it necessary to enter upon a few of these details in order to show the House that a serious and practical endeavour has been made to meet and overcome the difficulties of the case. If the Government could see their way to show sympathy with the Motion by granting a Committee to consider whether the practical solution of this question were possible, I have little doubt that we could convince the Committee that the difficulties could easily be surmounted. If we can, surely we ought to give this partial measure of relief to some of our worthiest citizens. Surely a maritime nation, dependent on the sea, not only for its trade and prosperity, not only for its security and immunity from attack, but for the actual existence and freedom from starvation of four-fifths of its inhabitants, ought to give to those who make the sea their calling, who do their business in the great waters, a chance to use the right, which belongs to them as well as to their fellow-citizens, of sharing in the government of their country. I beg to move.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said he felt no difficulty in rising to second the Motion. While he cordially sympathised with it, he at the same time had considerable sympathy with the Amendments which were to be moved. As regarded mariners, and still more as regarded men engaged in the fishing industry, this was a very important question. He considered it even more important with respect to fishermen in the herring fleet than to sailors. The law in this matter, as it at present stood, favoured the rich unduly at the expense of the poor candidate. It was easy for a man to whom money was no object to make an arrangement by which a vessel should call at a particular port on polling day. He had the honour last autumn to visit Argyllshire and the St. Andrews Burghs and to see what was going on at the elections, and he could testify to the intense hardships which the fishermen underwent in order to record their votes. If hon. Members only realised the situation which occurred in constituencies where there were large bodies of fishermen the prejudice against this Resolution would be much allayed. At the St. Andrews Burghs a large number of men were compelled to go back to sea to earn their livelihood, and were, therefore, unable to record their votes on the election day. He thought it would be sufficient to allow the votes to be recorded between the day of the nomination and the day of the poll. It might be said that this was not a democratic measure, but he would point out that a similar measure had been carried out in New Zealand, and had worked there without any hitch. It went further than this Motion proposed to go, for it applied to other classes who were necessarily absent from their homes on the day of the election. He had suggested to the mover of the Motion that he might slightly alter its terms so as to include other classes. The hon. Member would then have had a fair chance of getting the Motion carried by such an overwhelming majority that there would have been no voice worth considering against it. The Bill by which the hon. Member desired to give effect to the proposal in the Motion, though in the hands of some Members, was not at present before the House. He suggested that, in order to prevent disfranchisement, any person upon making a statutory declaration before a magistrate after the nomination of candidates of inability to attend, should be allowed to record his vote before the returning officer or such person as he might appoint.

SIR ELLIOTT LEES asked if the hon. Member was seconding his Motion or moving an Amendment.

*MR. MACONOCHIE (Aberdeenshire, E.) asked on the point of order whether after rising to second a Motion the hon. Member could propose an Amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member rose to second the Motion and not to move an Amendment. Otherwise I should have called upon some other Member.

*MR. MACONOCHIE: I am prepared to second it.

MR. CATHCART WASON said he began by seconding the Motion, and he was merely endeavouring to point out that the mover had better make peace with those hon. Members who might not be disposed to support the Motion in its present form. He cordially sympathised with the proposal the hon. Member had made, but it was acknowledged that there were grave difficulties in the way of giving effect to it, and he was indicating a way of securing more support for it. The hardship complained of was equally felt by engine drivers, commercial travellers, and others. He was grateful for the opportunity of seconding the Motion, as the hardship complained of affected many of his own constituents.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House is of opinion that means should be given to Seamen and Fishermen to record their Votes at Parliamentary Elections, when by reason of their calling they will be absent at sea on the day of the poll."—(*Sir Elliott Lees.*)

*MR. MACONOCHIE said that this was a subject of great interest in his constituency, which was one of the largest fishing communities in the world. For many years it had been felt a great hardship by the fishermen that they had been called away during an election without being able to record their votes. The matter had been frequently pressed upon his attention and that of his predecessors in the representation of East Aberdeenshire. It had been said by an hon. Member that there were only 19,000 fishermen; but there were more than that number in Ireland alone, and in the whole of Great Britain they numbered at least 100,000. He particularly emphasised this, because he believed that greater advantage would have attended this Motion if it had been made smaller, and not so elastic. He sympathised with the other classes besides fishermen who were at present unable to record their votes, such as engine drivers and commercial travellers, but he believed fishermen had the first claim on their sympathies, as the class from whom the Navy, Naval Reserve, and merchant marine were largely recruited. The Island of Lewis alone furnished 8,000 men for the Naval Reserve, and they were as fine and loyal a body as could be found throughout the Kingdom. When his constituents, numbering thousands, were away in the autumn at the English fishing grounds they felt it to be a great hardship that no provision was made for recording their votes. He hoped the right hon. Member for Forest of Dean, and the hon. Member for Derby, who had Amendments on the Paper, would support the Motion in its present form, because there would be no difficulty hereafter in extending the privilege to other classes of workers. So far as the fishermen were concerned, as it was to them we looked for strengthening our naval defence in time of trouble, it was a small thing to give to them, in times of peace, equal rights with other citizens.

*MR. BELL (Derby) said he was indebted to his right hon. friend the Member for Forest of Dean for allowing him precedence for the Amendment he had placed on the Paper. That Amendment was—

"In line 2, after the word 'fishermen,' to insert the words 'railway servants and others.' And in line 4, to leave out the words 'at sea,' and insert the words 'on duty.'"

He fully sympathised with the object of the hon. Member who had brought forward the Motion, and his Amendment was not hostile to it. It sought simply to extend its operation to others who suffered disabilities equally with those for whom the hon. Baronet opposite had pleaded. The hon. Member referred briefly to the engine drivers who, having to go on duty at a certain time, would not be able to return early enough to record their votes. He felt sure that the hon. Member was not familiar with the whole circumstances surrounding the employment of railway servants. There were employed on the railways of Great Britain 76,638 engine drivers, firemen, goods and passenger guards, and the effect of the present system was that 25 per cent. were practically disfranchised.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) said, on a point of order, this Resolution was for the purpose of dealing with seafaring men who at present suffered under a disability; the Amendment was for another class and another purpose.

***Mr. SPEAKER** said that on a Motion of this kind the Amendment was in order.

***Mr. BELL** said that the hon. Member who moved the Resolution referred incidentally to the fact that it was only occasionally those who were employed on railways were unable to record their votes, and he went on to make the remark that those who wished to make a full use of the franchise were entitled to make some sacrifice of time and money. But, even if these men were desirous to sacrifice time and money for the purpose of recording their vote, it would be perfectly impossible to take 18,000 men away from their work. And even if these particular men were relieved, the relieving men would still suffer under the disability. This class of employees were adults, and the whole of them were electors in the various constituencies. In the constituency of the hon. Member who moved the Resolution there were a large number of railway servants who suffered from this disability—it might be to the hon. Gentleman's disadvantage or otherwise, but that was immaterial. On the London and North Western Railway and the Great Western Railway there were a great many men who ran trains on what was called the "double home job." These men ran right through, say, to Exeter, or some equally distant town, where they rested a day, and then returned in the opposite direction. It was obvious that these men could not return to their homes in time to record their votes. Arrangements could be made to suit the convenience of these men in regard to voting far more easily than in the case of fishermen. His own suggestion for removing the disability under which these railway men at present suffered was, that the returning officer should be empowered to receive their votes on the day preceding the poll on production of an order from their employers to the effect that their work on the trains would take them away from their homes on the polling day itself. He claimed that if there was to be an extension of this privilege to any class, those in whose behalf he spoke were entitled to it. He believed that his sympathies with the seamen and fishermen were as extensive as those of anyone in this House or out of it. He had demonstrated that on previous occasions, when he had endeavoured to have these people included under the Workmen's Compensation Act. It had been said that seamen and fishermen who were much at sea were out of touch with the topics of the day; but those for whom he spoke were very much in touch with the topics of the day, attended meetings, talked with candidates, and only desired to have an opportunity of recording their votes before they left home with their trains. For these reasons he thought the Amendment which he had proposed ought to be acceptable to the mover and seconder of the Resolution. The hon. Member who seconded the Motion suggested that the men might bring an order signed by the magistrate to the returning officer, but that would be an impossibility in the case of 18,000 railway servants.

***Mr. LEVY** (Leicestershire, Loughborough) seconded the Amendment. He said he was not enamoured with a desire to alter the system of election by ballot but he thought that if any change were made it would be unjust to exclude the great body of railway men. There were also men employed in the engineering trade who had similar difficulties in voting, and many workmen in London who had to leave home before the hour of polling to go long distances to work and returned after it was too late to vote. It would be unfair in the extreme if the House legislated for one particular class of voters alone. He felt that fishermen did suffer some disadvantages, but if any alteration was made the railwaymen and others should have the same advantage as the fishermen. If railwaymen remained away from their duties to exercise the franchise on the days of election, they would disorganise the whole railway traffic of the country, whereas if fishermen remained on shore to vote probably the only result would be a slight increase in the price of fish. He had very great pleasure in seconding the Amendment of his hon. friend.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 2, after the word 'fishermen' to insert the words 'railway servants and others.'" (*Mr. Bell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) supported the Amendment. He did so not from any feeling of hostility to the Motion, but in order to secure for it a better basis of support. He had had two opportunities of forming a judgment on this question. In Hull the seamen and fishermen had been greatly disappointed on many occasions because they had been unable to return to record their votes; and he had known at any rate one case in which the result of an election had been determined in a large measure by that inability. The franchise was not only a personal right and privilege but it was a right which should be exercised in the interest of the State. While supporting the principle of the proposal he did not think they ought to underrate the difficulties which surrounded it, and that was a reason for obtaining a general instead of a class support. The extension of any privilege of this sort, however, would entirely fail of its object if accompanied by complex, dilatory, or expensive conditions, its only justification would be that the process should be simple and easy in operation. He represented a constituency largely composed of railway servants, large numbers of whom were at present prevented from exercising the franchise. His hon. friend and others seemed to think that seamen particularly were entitled to consideration, but surely what they had to consider was more the compulsory performance of public duty which rendered absence necessary. That included the large class to which he had referred, and he was surprised to hear his hon. friend say that railway servants could leave their employment in order to vote, and defy their employers. Although he sympathised with the object of the Motion he hoped, if it was carried into practice, it would be made to include all these other workers who in the performance of their duty were practically compulsorily deprived of their right to vote.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire) said this was a subject in which he had always been interested. Twelve years ago he introduced a Bill to carry out the very purpose of the hon. Baronet opposite, but his Bill did not pass. His interest in the subject arose from the fact that there were many fishermen in his constituency who did him the honour of voting for him at the election, and when the election arrived and the fishermen were not there it gave him considerable trouble and he set himself the task of attempting to find a remedy. But while he was quite ready to vote for the Motion of the hon. Baronet, at the same time he fully admitted the principle of the Amendment. He saw that there were very great difficulties in the way of making a distinction for one class, but he understood at the present time policemen had some special privileges. He thought that in order to meet the case of the different classes affected there should be some relaxing of the rigidity of the present rule as to the day of the poll, which might be extended so as to allow these fishermen and railway men a further opportunity of exercising their right to vote. Whether the Amendment was carried or not he should vote for the Motion.

MR. LLEWELLYN (Somersetshire, N.) said he thought that the object which hon. Members had in view could only be carried out by a careful examination before a Select Committee. There were so many difficulties surrounding this question that the only real solution of it was to refer it to a Select Committee. What the hon. Member for Derby had said was absolutely correct and no one wished engine drivers and guards to lose their votes. He did not want a single man to lose his vote, but he saw great difficulties in the way of the application of the principle of the Motion, and he hoped that the Government would consent to refer the whole subject to a Select Committee. There was one class of seamen who had not been alluded to which he was sure the House would be sorry to forget — he referred to the class of men round the coast who acted as pilots. There was no class upon whom public safety was more dependent than the pilots. They were men who did not take long voyages, but they were at the call of all steamers coming towards our shores, and they had to go when called upon. They were not wanderers and they had homes on shore, and most of them were ratepayers, and they ought to have some consideration. He could not vote against the Amendment, because he had the greatest sympathy with the railway men in this matter. He would press upon his hon. friend who was in charge of this matter to consider whether it would not be the best plan to thoroughly thresh the subject out before a Select Committee.

*Mr. JOYCE (Limerick) said he represented a seaport, and was more or less interested in this question. For a number of years he was a seaman himself. He thought the House ought to be in full sympathy with the hon. Member who had proposed this Motion. He did not see why men who had to work hard for their living and who knew as much of what was going on in this country as those who lived on shore, should be deprived of their votes. When he was in the habit of going to sea he was as much interested in local and national questions as he was now. He should like this Motion to embrace a wider class, for in its present form it was rather narrow. He thought the pilots were a most deserving body of men, and he suggested that instead of being confined to seamen and fishermen the scope of the Motion should be extended to those following a seafaring life. While he thought that legislation giving the rights of citizenship to seamen and fishermen should be passed, he did not think the hon. Member would be forwarding his cause if he refused to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Derby. Probably, if this Motion was adopted, a Select Committee would be appointed to go into the niceties of the question.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R. Thirsk) said that with regard to the suggestion made by the hon. Member for Somerset, to refer this question to a Select Committee, that was a matter upon which it was not possible for him to give an answer, and it was a question which ought to be addressed to the Prime Minister. With regard to the Amendment before the House, he was sure the hon. Member for Derby did not wish to use the claims of one class of workers to injure the claims of another class; and yet that would be the effect of the Amendment. Seamen and fishermen did not often get the chance of bringing their grievances before the House of Commons, and when they did it was hard that they should be met with an Amendment which would defeat their claims without advancing any others. It would be difficult enough to give practical effect to the Motion before the House, but it would be beyond the wit of man to draft a Bill which would meet every possible case covered by the Amendment. If the privilege of voting by proxy were given to those who were on duty, why not to those who were on business or who were detained by urgent necessity or sickness? The result of trying to do too much at once would be that the seamen and fishermen would lose their chance. He would suggest to the hon. Member for Derby a better way of getting what he desired. He was entirely unprejudiced in this matter, and if he had any leanings they were in favour of the railway men, who were a very responsible body of men, and Members of Parliament owed much to them, for they were a conspicuously sober, intelligent, capable, and respectable body of citizens. He would not say one word against their rights. No doubt the public owed a great obligation to the railway men, who were a most deserving class, and they ought to be given every assistance; but the railway companies were anxious to give their men all reasonable facilities for voting, and the cases of hardship must be getting fewer. The surest method of getting a change in the law was to deal with the most obvious cases of hardship first. The household franchise had been reduced gradually, and he suggested that this was the way to proceed now. If it was found practicable to draw a Bill to carry out the desire of the hon. Member for Birkenhead, he thought that it would not be found to have the evil results predicted. If it was found possible to give these classes the power of voting by proxy, then would be the time to make the extension. Personally he was in favour of giving every voter in the country every facility to vote, and he considered it to be the duty of the State not only to help men to vote, but to encourage them to vote, and under certain safeguards to compel them to vote, not only in Parliamentary elections but in local elections. The proportion of seamen who went to the poll was less than the proportion which prevailed among the general electors of the country. A landsman was not hindered in these days of cheap and easy transit from voting, but the seaman might find himself hundreds of miles from shore. The landsman might have to forfeit some portion of his day's wages on the day of the poll, and he was sorry that this should be the case. Seamen, however, if they stayed on shore to vote, might sacrifice the fruits of a whole voyage or the share of a season's catch. If the House wished to make this a practical proposal he hoped that the hon. Member for Derby would not consider it necessary to press his Amendment to a division.

MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) confessed that he could not see why the Government should have any difficulty in referring this subject to a Select Committee. The question was what course they proposed to adopt in regard to the Amendment.

MR. GRANT LAWSON said it was the Amendment which caused the difficulty.

MR. HEMPHILL said there surely could be no difficulty in sending the whole question to a Select Committee. It was a matter of considerable importance, and he was glad to think that the hon. Member at least approved the principle of the general Resolution, which opened the door to the consideration of the larger question involved in the Amendment. He thought that railway men had a grievance as well as seamen and fishermen. If it were right for seamen and mariners to have this privilege, it would only be fair to extend it to all who were physically debarred from casting their votes on the day fixed for the election. Already special provision had been made for the blind and the illiterate. It might be suggested that railway men could leave their work for the polling day. So, too, could mariners; but why should they incur that loss and run the risk of losing their employment. He once contested a constituency—Hastings—where a great number of fishermen who were anxious to vote for him could not do so, because they had to be out at sea from five in the morning till after eight at night. Let them do equal justice all round in this matter. All the difficulties could be dealt with in Committee, but let the House now lay down the principle that any citizen disabled from any cause from giving his vote should be no longer disfranchised thereby. He should support the Amendment.

SIR ELLIOTT LEES said he agreed that the privilege ought to be extended to railway men, and no doubt if his proposal were carried it would eventually be. But he held that it would be bad Parliamentary tactics if the hon. Member for Derby pressed his Amendment, as it might endanger the prospect of removing the grievance of seamen and fishermen. Still, if there were a division on the Amendment he should feel it impossible to vote against it. Let them, however, proceed step by step, because he believed that if once they got the matter referred to a Select Committee, it would be easy to devise a practicable scheme for removing these disabilities.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire) was glad to note the sympathetic reception given by the Secretary to the Local Government Board to the general proposal now before the House. He disagreed with the mover of the Motion that this was a question of tactics. The question of tactics would be easily disposed of if they got an undertaking from the Government that, if a Bill were introduced dealing with the case of seamen and fishermen, they would give it their support. It would certainly in that case become law before the next general election. He would like particularly to emphasise the position of the men engaged in the herring fishery. Theirs was a hard case, for they were now employed all the year round away from home.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I think it would be desirable first to dispose of the case of the railway men, which is the subject of the Amendment.

*Mr. BLACK said he would, in that case, content himself with asking if the Government would support any Bill carrying out the proposals both of the mover of the Motion and of the hon. Member for Derby.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) also asked for an assurance from the Government that they would take steps to deal with this question, as it affected railway men as well as fishermen. Would the Government support any Bill having that for its object?

Mr. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth) asked to what extent the word "others" in the Amendment would affect Government employees, such as soldiers, postmen, policemen, and especially sailors of the Royal Navy. He pointed out how when the Channel Squadron was off Spithead the Devonport men among the crew had no chance of voting, while, if it were off Devonport, the Portsmouth men were similarly debarred. Could not some scheme be devised to enable these men to record their votes?

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) suggested that the word "others" was capable of a wide interpretation, and might leave the door open to a great many malpractices. He thought the Amendment should be modified in this respect, so as to make it clear that the privilege was to extend only to them who were absolutely prevented by the nature of their duties from recording their votes on the polling day.

Mr. CUMMING MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe) said he intended to vote for the Motion, because he represented Rotherhithe, where there were three and a-half miles of sailors. What applied to Rotherhithe applied also to every port in the kingdom. He saw no reason why the Amendment should not be accepted and incorporated in the Motion, for in his opinion railway men were just as much entitled to the privilege as sailors.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD hoped the Amendment would not be persisted in, not because he had not a great deal of sympathy with railway men, but because he believed its acceptance would simply lead to the passing of an impracticable Resolution. If, on the other hand, the Motion were adopted and the Government saw their way to give facilities for legislation on the subject, and a Bill were passed, there would be an unanswerable case afterwards for railway men and others to come in and have their grievances remedied. He remembered an occasion at Liverpool on which 300 men who had to leave the city by an early morning train were prevented recording their votes because they were delayed on the return journey and their train did not get in till eight o'clock. How were they to deal with such a case? He appealed to the hon. Member to withdraw the Amendment.

Mr. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said he should support the Amendment not only because it included railway servants but because it included others. He instanced engineers and workmen engaged in the building trade as classes of voters requiring special facilities for voting. They often left home by the first train on Monday morning and did not return until Saturday, and they, in his opinion, were as much entitled to the privilege as any other class. What course did the Government propose to take in view of the fact that the mover of the Resolution was not prepared to challenge a vote on the Amendment? Were the Government prepared to accept the further suggestion that the whole question, as affecting all voters, should be referred to a Select Committee, so that the many difficulties surrounding the subject might be threshed out, reported upon, and definite legislation introduced as early as possible? Seeing the House was so unanimously in favour of this extension of voting power, he thought the Government might very well agree to appoint a Select Committee to consider the whole question.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) did not agree that the House was unanimously in favour of the original Motion being passed. So far as the Amendment was concerned, if the matter went to a division he would support the hon. Member for Derby, because he held that railway servants were as much deserving of consideration as the other classes who had been mentioned. At the same time, he thought the original Motion was impossible and illogical, and when the Amendment had been disposed of he would have something to say on the main question.

MR. TOMKINSON (Cheshire, Crewe) hoped the Amendment would be carried, as it seemed to him that railway men were more entitled to the proposed extension than fishermen, being less free agents. Their duties absolutely compelled them to be absent from the polling booth, whereas a vast number of fishermen were able to please themselves.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight) asked whether, after the Amendment had been disposed of, it would be in order to move the reference of the matter to a Select Committee.

*MR. SPEAKER said that when the Amendments to the Motion had been disposed of it would be competent to propose the addition of some such words as "and that it is desirable that the matter should be referred to a Select Committee," but a proposal actually to appoint a Select Committee was one of which notice should be given. All that the House could do now was to express a desire that the matter should be so referred.

Question put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the words 'at sea,' and insert the words 'on duty.'"—(*Mr. Bell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.) said that, while the great majority in the House appeared to be agreed that it was desirable that steps should be taken to enable those who enjoyed the franchise to exercise that privilege, there was a grave difficulty created by the Amendment now proposed. He could not accept the Amendment on the understanding that it pledged the Government to further action in the matter, inasmuch as the language used was so vague. If it was desired that there should be an examination of the existing disabilities of those who were entitled to vote but were prevented from doing so by their occupations, that might form the subject of inquiry by a Select Committee; but it was obvious that the terms of reference to such a Committee would have to be very carefully considered by the Government. If the House desired to deal with a practical difficulty in a practical manner, he would suggest that the proper way would be to withdraw alike the reference to seamen and those on duty and to refer the whole matter to a Select Committee, the terms of reference to which Committee should, as he had said, be very carefully considered. While the Government did not intend to offer opposition to the Resolution as it stood, they could not be responsible for carrying into effect a Resolution so vague as the present Motion would become by the insertion of the words now proposed.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) supported the insertion of the consequential words now proposed, but he could not help thinking that the speech just made on behalf of the Cabinet, to use the famous Treasury phrase, "opened a very serious door." There were Gentlemen who possessed sixty votes in different parts of the country. If the suggestion was that anything should be done to encourage the adoption of a plan by which such Gentlemen or even fagot voters might be assisted, he was sure that that was not the intention of the supporters of this proposal. By voting for this Amendment the sense of the House would be expressed on the subject.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY pointed out that, by refusing to insert the words "on duty," the House would make nonsense of the Motion, for it would then refer to "railway men . . . at sea."

Question put, and negatived.

Words "on duty" inserted.

Main Question, as amended, proposed.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY said the question now at issue was an extremely important one, and he was surprised that the Government, having expressed their general sympathy with the proposal, should have left it to the chance of a private Members' night instead of introducing a sensible measure on the subject. It was well known that such Motions seldom led to any practical result, and to deal with this question by Resolution was only a way of evading the practical difficulties which would be apparent on any attempt to legislate. In a practical measure every class with the same grievance would have to be included, and the result, as had been admitted in the debate, would be the introduction of a revolutionary system. It was an extraordinary thing that the Government should assist a revolutionary proposal by assenting to a Resolution of this kind. The present law of Parliamentary registration was arrived at after Amendments made during a long course of years, and one essential feature had always been recognised—the presence of the voter on the polling day. Under such a scheme as had been outlined in the debate, that feature would be done away with, as also would the secrecy of the ballot. The change, amounting almost to a revolution, now proposed was one not to be hastily adopted. Following his hon. friend's description of the system to be followed it was obvious that it would greatly add to the returning officers' expenses, already considered much too high by hon. Gentlemen opposite. In the case of the blind and illiterate it was physically impossible for them to record their vote. Up to the present they had had no discussion on the Main Question which had been limited to the speeches of the hon. Member who introduced the Motion and the seconder. Therefore he thought it was quite legitimate for him to discuss the Main Question. He felt sure that the secrecy of the ballot would be broken by the proposals which had been put forward and there would be a new principle introduced, namely, that the returning officer would have to keep the polling places open for many days longer. In this way they would be returning to the old condition of things. He thought one day was sufficient for the polling stations to be kept open. It was an extraordinary thing that a suggestion should now be made to go back to the old system. The hon. Member had pointed out a very serious difficulty in the fact that a voter might record his vote and then go to sea and the candidate he had voted for might afterwards change his views. If some hon. Member would show him how this measure could be brought in, and could be acted upon in an efficient and proper manner, he should be much obliged. The hon. Member who introduced the Motion said it passed the wit of man to carry out his suggestions in a proper way, and it was because he believed that the only thing this proposal would do would be to give more work to lawyers that he should oppose the Motion.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange) urged that the Motion and the Amendment should be withdrawn in order that a Select Committee might be appointed to deal with the whole subject. He did not think it would eb practicable to keep the polling booths open from the day on which the writ was issued to the day of the poll, but it would be practicable to keep it open from the day of nomination to the day of the poll. Railway men who, owing to their calling, could not attend on the polling day, were entitled, equally with sailors, to consideration. Although he thought the sailors had a prior claim because they were practically disfranchised, at the same time he thought the case of the railway men stood almost upon all fours with the case of the sailor. It seemed to him, however, that it would be unwise to refuse the offer made by the President of the Local Government Board. This Resolution would come to nothing, but if it was withdrawn they had a pledge from the Government that the whole subject would be inquired into by a Select Committee.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) agreed that they should take great care not to facilitate voting in the shape of fagot votes. He did not think this Resolution, as it stood, could be regarded as complete, because it dealt with working men only, and although he was in favour of the Motion being carried into effect if possible, he was of opinion that if any change was made in the law it should be of such a character as to embrace other classes than those referred to either in the Motion or the Amendment. He thought the professional class who were of necessity away from home on the polling day, and those employed in the Civil Service, who were often absent from their homes on public duty, and others whom he might mention, should be included.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS said the hon. Baronet the Member for Peckham had made a most statesmanlike speech, although it had been received with jeers from the other side. He thought a distinction should be drawn between those persons who were absent on private affairs and those who were absent on official duties, and it should be made feasible for Civil servants to record their votes when they were away from home on duty.

*MR. RENWICK (Newcastle-on-Tyne) said he represented a seaport, and during the elections he had never heard the question mentioned as to whether railway men or other officials required better facilities for recording their vote. He had, however, frequently heard the question raised that seamen should be allowed special facilities for voting. This Motion asked the House to give seamen and fishermen better facilities, and yet Gentlemen opposite — [OPPOSITION Cries of "Divide."] Did hon. Members opposite object to being called gentlemen? [OPPOSITION Cries of "Divide, divide."]

MR. BLACK rose in his place, and claimed to move "That the Question be now put;" but MR. SPEAKER withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

*MR. SPEAKER: Surely time will be saved if hon. Members will allow the hon. Gentleman to finish his remark. At the same time I must say that the hon. Member was wrong in addressing such observations to hon. Members opposite, and he should address the Chair.

*Mr. RENWICK said if he had said anything wrong he would withdraw his remarks. He hoped the House would accept the offer of the President of the Local Government Board to refer the matter to a Select Committee. The fishermen and seamen were not there to speak for themselves, and he hoped both sides of the House would accept the offer which had been made.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That this House is of opinion that means should be given to Seamen and Fishermen, railway servants, and others to record their votes at Parliamentary elections, when by reason of their calling they will be absent on duty on the day of the poll.

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said it would be impossible to allow such a Bill to go through at that late hour without any explanation or discussion, because the measure was an extremely important one and dealt with a very large subject.

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed this day.

Mr. Speaker.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

Ordered, That the Committee of Public Accounts do consist of fifteen members.

Ordered, That Sir Frederick Banbury, Mr. Blake, Mr. Gibson Bowles, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Victor Cavendish, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Goddard, Sir William Brampton Gurdon, Sir Arthur Hayter Mr. Herbert Lewis, Sir Robert Mowbray, Mr. Pym, and Mr. Yerburgh be members of the Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

IRISH VALUATION ACTS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire and report what changes in the Irish Valuation Acts are desirable in order to enable a revaluation of rateable property in any district to be made on a basis equitable to all classes of ratepayers, and to be brought into force in an effective manner.

Ordered, That Mr. Clancy, Sir John Colomb, Mr. Craig, Mr. Joseph Devlin, Mr. Douglas, Mr. Duke, Mr. Goulding, Sir James Haslett, Mr. Hemphill, Mr. Lee, Mr. Lough, Mr. William M'Killop, Mr. W. J. H. Maxwell, Mr. A. Graham Murray, and Mr. Randles be members of the Select Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Adjourned at five minutes after
Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 9th March, 1904.

The House met at Two of the clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time) Bill. As amended, to be considered To-morrow.

London Port and Docks Bill. To be read a second time upon Tuesday, 19th April.

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order. Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State under The Metropolitan Police Act, 1886, and The Metropolitan Police Courts Act, 1897, relating to lands in the parishes of Islington, Tottenham, Putney, and Woolwich, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cochrane and Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order made by one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State under The Metropolitan Police Act, 1886, and The Metropolitan Police Courts Act, 1897, relating to lands in the parishes of Islington, Tottenham, Putney, and Woolwich," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 117.]

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP D).

Mr. Cremer reported from the Committee on Group D of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Eleven o'clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Chippenham Gas Bill; Littlestone-on-Sea and District Water Bill; South Shields Gas Bill; South-Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway (Extension of Time) Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 2).

Mr. Ashton reported from the Committee on Group No. 2 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Monday next, at Two o'clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES, ETC., BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES TAXATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table.

Petition from Glasgow, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of law; from Stafford (five); Rockferry; Knutsford; Liverpool; Holborn; Surbiton Park; Falfield; Beaminster; Leicester (three); Bradford; Dorset; Lemington on Tyne; Brynamman; Burry Port; Whiteinch; Clangenneth; Radcliffe; Aberllefenni; Ilfracombe; Abergavenny (two); Fordwych; Pontnewynydd; Littlemoor; Cleveley; Duffield; and Marple Bridge; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.

Petitions against; from Moseley Gravesend; Anderston; Peckham (two); Peterborough; Motherwell; Custom House; Canning Town; Rothwell; Tottenham; Maidstone; South Tottenham; Bridgeton; Poplar; Edinburgh; Ilkeston; Alfreton; Bristol (two); and Kentish Town; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).

Copy presented, of the Postal Order (New Zealand) Regulations, 1904, dated 25th February, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

MILITARY MANŒUVRES, 1904.

Copy presented, of Draft Order in Council relative to Military Manœuvres, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

LOAN FUND BOARD (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Sixty-sixth Annual Report, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Cows in the County of London.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): To ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he can state how many cows were kept within the area of the county of London during the last five years, giving the number for each year separately.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) The number of cows kept within the area of the county of London during the last five years respectively were—1899, 5,467; 1900, 5,040; 1901, 4,972; 1902, 4,669; 1903, 4,689.

Convictions for Illegal Trawling in Scotland.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state on how many days each Fishery Board cruiser has been at sea during the year ending 31st December, 1903, and the number of convictions for illegal trawling secured by each vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) The Return for 1903 as required by the hon. Member is—

Name.	Number of days at sea.	Convictions secured.
"Vigilant"	275	2
"Minna" .	242	10
"Brenda" .	224	6
"Norna" .	186	0

Foreign Trawlers in the Moray Firth.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state how many foreign trawlers have been observed fishing in the Moray Firth during the year ending 31st December, 1903, and their respective nationalities.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) During the year 1903, foreign trawlers have been observed fishing in the Moray Firth upon 195 occasions, on 170 of these occasions the boat was of Scandinavian and the remainder, I believe, were all of Belgian, nationality. The hon. Member will remember the numbers given are of occasions on which boats have been observed, and are no index to the actual number of different boats engaged in fishing the Moray Firth.

Trade with Japan—Japanese Guarantees against Loss.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Government of Japan guarantees against loss vessels proceeding with cargoes to Japan; and, if so, can he state whether such guarantees are restricted to vessels chartered by the Japanese Government or are given generally, and also whether such guarantees are confined to vessels carrying particular cargoes; and, if so, what cargoes.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) His Majesty's Government have no knowledge of the terms of any contracts which the Japanese Government or their agents may have concluded with firms in this country, and are consequently not in a position to answer the right hon. Member's Question.

Export of Coal—Publication of Return.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can say when the Return relating to exports of coal from various ports in this country to various countries abroad will be in the hands of Members.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour*). The Return will probably be issued next week.

Uganda Currency.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if, in view of the fact that shells are now illegal currency in the Uganda Protectorate, he will substitute a coin of as nearly as is possible the same value, and holed.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The introduction into the Uganda Protectorate of new copper coins representing decimal parts of the rupee is dealt with in the Draft Order in Council providing for a new currency, which is now before the Commissioner. The possibility of holing the coinage has not been lost sight of.

Improvement of Phœnix Park.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury when and under whose supervision it is proposed to expend the extra sum of £3,155 on replanting and improving the Phœnix Park; is he aware that any timber trees planted in the Park in recent years have been of the cheapest and commonest kind; and that there are a variety of expensive trees and shrubs planted in the London Royal Parks to which the Phœnix Park is equally suited, but which are not to be found there; and will the work of replanting be entrusted to some landscape gardener or nurseryman of recognised authority.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The money will be expended after the 31st inst. under the supervision of the Board of Public Works, who have had the best professional assistance as well as the co-operation of amateur experts, one of whom has presented the Board with about 800 specimen trees not to be obtained in the open market. The answer to the second Question is in the negative. No expense is spared in selecting the best trees and shrubs suitable for the soil and climate of the park. The replanting will be entrusted to the park bailiff.

Pensions of Clerks of Senior Assistant (Abstractor) Class.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch Hoxton): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury how many clerks of the senior assistant (abstractor) class have been called upon to retire, after twenty-five or more years continuous service, upon pensions of 15s. a week or less; and, having regard to the condition such pensions must entail, he will consider whether some steps can be taken to augment the allowances to these clerks.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) I am not in a position to state the number of persons who have retired under the circumstances referred to by the hon. Member, as a list of such cases is not kept at the Treasury. Clerks of the abstractor class are pensioned under the same conditions as other members of the permanent Civil Service; and I see no reason for treating them differently.

Indian Currency—Gold.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): To ask the Secretary of State for India if a statement can be presented showing particulars relating to recent working of the modern system of Indian currency; the net export of gold from India during the latter half of last year and the month of January in the present year, stating what amount or proportion of the total has been received here on State account; what amounts of gold were held by the Indian Government at the end of January in the Currency Reserve, the Government Treasuries, and the Gold Reserve Fund, including the amount of the latter invested in Consols; what is the total number of sovereigns disbursed in the above period in payment of the Indian Government's public works material, salaries, and other current charges; and the number of sovereigns, in lieu of Rs. 15, that have been received by the Indian Government for land revenue, Customs, or other fiscal liabilities.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) Exports and Imports of Gold—Exports from 1st July to 31st December, 1903, £4,571,700, of which £3,267,700 was consigned to the Secretary of State. Imports, £6,640,300. Net Imports, £2,068,600. Complete figures for January have not yet been received from India. Gold in possession of Government of India, 31st January, 1904; in Currency Reserve, £9,207,000; in Treasuries, £145,000; in Gold Reserve Fund, £500,000; British Securities held on behalf of the Gold Reserve Fund, 31st January, 1904—£4,762,150 (amount of stock held). Receipts and disbursements of sovereigns—The Government of India have informed me that for the reason given in the reply to the hon. Member's Question of 16th July, 1903,† it is not possible to furnish the information asked for concerning the disbursements of sovereigns in payment for public works, etc., and the receipts for land revenue, etc.

Indian Currency—Silver.

SIR JOHN LENG: To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state what were the total imports of silver into India during the latter half of last year and the month of January in the present year, specifying the amount on Government account, and sums of silver coined or recoined and issued in the period; what net values of currency notes have been issued, on monthly average, in that period, and what is the gross total estimated now to be in circulation; the amount of the cash balances of the Indian treasuries in India and England, respectively, at the end of January; the estimated profit made by the Indian Government on coinage of silver in the period; and how that sum is allocated or placed to account.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) Imports of Silver—1st July to 31st December, 1903, £4,682,900 (viz., on Private Account, £2,707,500, on Government Account, £1,975,400). Complete figures for January, 1904, have not yet been received from India. Coinage—Silver coined 1st July to 31st December, 1903, £3,313,700 (including recoinage of old and uncurrent coin). Figures for January, 1904, have not yet been received from India. Currency notes—Gross circulation on 15th February, 1904, £23,608,672. In the seven months period mentioned in the Question there was a reduction of £731,663 in the gross circulation (a monthly average of £104,523). Cash balances on 31st January, 1904 — India £9,201,300; England, £5,518,600. Estimated profit on coinage of silver—From 1st July to 31st January, £1,323,000 (this sum has been invested on behalf of the Gold Reserve Fund).

Post Commission Study for Officers of Indian Medical Service.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state what arrangements, if any, have been made for post commission study by seconded officers of the Indian Medical Service; and in what respects the arrangements in force or proposed are similar to or differ from those of the Royal Army Medical Corps and the medical officers of the Royal Navy.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) An officer of the Indian Medical Service may be granted one month's study leave for each year's service up to twelve months in all. During such leave the ordinary furlough pay will be given, with lodging allowances of 4s. 6d. and 8s. a day for lieutenants, captains, and field officers respectively. In the Royal Army Medical Corps the arrangements for post commission study are somewhat different. All junior officers are posted to the Royal Army Medical College for six months. While there they draw their ordinary pay. The examination at the end of the course is combined with examination for promotion to the rank of major. Medical officers of the Royal Navy are required to undergo a post-graduate course of three months once in every eight years. They receive full pay, lodging allowance at the rate of £50 or £70 a year according to rank, and provision allowance at the rate of £24 a year. In addition to the extra furlough for study granted to Indian Medical Service officers they may be seconded before proceeding to India for the purpose of holding appointments in recognised civil hospitals. During such periods they receive no pay from India revenues.

Government of India and Coopers Hill Engineering College.

SIR SEYMOUR KING: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in accordance with the assurance of the Secretary of State on 16th July, 1903, the Government of India have been consulted with regard to continuing or discontinuing the Royal Indian Engineering College at Coopers Hill; and whether any decision has been arrived at.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The Government of India were consulted as promised by my predecessor, and I hope shortly to announce the decision arrived at by the Secretary of State in Council on this question.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 845.

Irish Purchase Act, 1891—Extended Repayments.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that a tenant has the power, under the Purchase Act of 1891, of extending the period of repayment of annuities from the shorter to the longer number of years and thereby get the benefit of decadal reductions, he can state what the amount of the annuity payable by a tenant would be, and for how many years, who purchased a £20 rental at eighteen years purchase without decadal reductions under the Purchase Act of 1891; and whether he can state, in the case of the same tenant who purchased a £20 rental at eighteen years under the 1891 Act with decadal reductions, what number of years his annuity would have to run, and what would be the amount of his annuity for each of the periods over which he is entitled to get the benefits of the decadal reductions, and what would be the amount of his total payments and his average annual payments under the extended period of repayment, with decadal reductions.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The following table gives the information desired. Acts 1891–1896. Rent £20, eighteen years purchase, purchase money £360. Annuity £14 8s. which would repay advance in forty-two and a half years without decadal reductions. Total amount paid in forty-two and a half years £612.† With decadal reductions—Annuity payable for first ten years, £14 8s.; second ten years £12 6s. 10d.; third ten years £10 11s. 6d.; final period forty-two and a half years £9 1s. 6d. Total payments—first ten years £144; second ten years £123 8s. 4d.; third ten years £105 15s.; Final period forty-two and a half years £385 13s. 9d.; Total paid in seventy-two and a half years £758 17s. 1d.† Average annual payment for term of seventy-two and a half years £10 9s. 6d.

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† Includes sinking fund and interest.

Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will arrange that the appointment to be created on the permanent establishment of the veterinary branch, clerical staff, of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction will be filled by the promotion of one of the gentlemen who have from nine to thirteen years service, and whose salaries are still less than £100 a year.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The claims and qualifications of all persons who are considered eligible for promotion to the position referred to will be duly considered.

Vacancies on First of First Teachers' Pension Establishment.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many vacancies have occurred on the First of First Teachers' Pension establishment; and the number who have been promoted to it since the new pension rules came into force in 1897.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The number of vacancies in the pension establishment of the First of First Class which occurred since 1st January, 1898, when the new pension rules came into force, is ninety-four, and the number of promotions is the same.

Maryborough Prison Warders.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is part of the duties of the prison warders attached to Maryborough Convict Prison to drive the prison horses and carts and deliver vegetables and farm produce in the town and district; whether he is aware that on last pig fair day in Maryborough two warders were sent out in full uniform driving a number of pigs before them; and whether, in view of the effect of the imposition of such duties upon the standard of men who join the Irish prison service, he will take steps to insure that such duties shall not in future be imposed on prison warders.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) It is the duty of the warder who is detailed to take charge of the prison transport car to deliver farm produce grown in the prison grounds, and to convey goods to and from the railway station. Two warders in uniform assisted the storekeeper on a recent occasion in the manner stated in the second part of the Question, but this was done without the authority of the prison governor, and will not occur again.

Village Tenants and Irish Land Purchase.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will introduce a clause in his proposed amending Land Bill, giving the tenants of an estate not principally agricultural or pastoral, but consisting of ground rents in a village with plots of land, who agree with their landlord as to the purchase price, the right to purchase under the Irish Land Act, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The reply to this Question is in the negative.

Training of Irish National School Teachers.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will arrange that every classed teacher engaged in any national school in Ireland who desires to get trained shall, without any entrance examination and by application to the National Education Commissioners, get an order for admission to some approved training college in rotation according to the date of application, in order to save the strain involved in preparation for such an examination.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The question will be considered by the Commissioners at their meeting on Tuesday next.

Presbyterian Army Chaplains employed during the South African War.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state how many Presbyterian chaplains, commissioned or acting, were employed during the South African War, and how many belonged to the Established Church, and how many to the United Free Church respectively, and what was the amount of money paid to the ministers of the two denominations for their services in the war.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) Six commissioned chaplains of the Presbyterian denomination were employed during the South African war, two belonging to the United Free Church, one to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, and three to the Established Church. In addition to these there were thirty-two civilian Presbyterian clergymen at one time or another on Army duty. From the information at the disposal of the War Office, it is not possible to distinguish the particular branch of the Presbyterian Church to which they belonged, and accordingly the amount of money paid to each cannot be determined.

The Army Council.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfar): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the principles which are to regulate the proceedings of the Army Council are to be formulated by Order in Council; and, if so, when.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster*). A portion of the recommendations of the War Office Reconstitution Committee will require to be formulated in an Order in Council. The matter is under consideration; and steps will be taken to frame the Order in Council as soon as possible.

Army—Chief of General Staff.

MR. BUCHANAN: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether a Chief of the General Staff of the Army has been appointed as stated on page 22 of Part II. of the War Office Reconstitution Committee; and, if so, who holds this appointment, and upon what Vote his salary will be borne.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) Lieutenant-General Sir N. Lyttelton has been appointed Chief of the General Staff, and his salary is provided in Vote

13 as a military member of the Army Council.

Wages of Natives in Rand Mines.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state the rate of wages paid to natives in the Rand mines immediately before the war, immediately after the war, and at the present time.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The hon. Member will find the information he requires at page 202 of [Cd. 1895], and in Exhibit I. following after page 671 of [Cd. 1897].

Immigration of Undesirable Aliens into the Transvaal.

MR. RANDLES (Cumberland, Cockermouth): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether there is any law in force in the Transvaal to prevent the importation of persons of any class or colour; and, if not, would he consider with Lord Milner the desirability of legislation for the Transvaal on lines similar to those proposed in the Government measure for preventing undesirable alien immigration into the United Kingdom.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) There is no law in force for preventing the importation of persons of any class or colour into the Transvaal, but the Peace Preservation Ordinance affords opportunity of controlling it. Lord Milner proposes later on to pass an Immigration Restriction Ordinance on the lines of the Cape and Natal Acts.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Royal Arsenal, Woolwich.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, seeing that pensions are now granted to retired officers, foremen, and assistant foremen of the clerical staff of the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, but withheld from men working in the same establishment on low wages who have served as soldiers or sailors, he will consider the advisability of dealing with the latter in the same manner as other discharged soldiers are dealt with who serve in prisons, parks, post offices, barrack departments, and other Government establishments.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): I am afraid that the hon. and gallant Member's Question is not understood. Would he be kind enough to specify more particularly the cases which he has in view.

Army Printing Vote.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, having regard to the fact that the estimated expenditure for stationery and printing for the Army is given under Class 2, Vote 23, as £140,000 for 1904–5, the same sum as the previous year, will he consider the expediency of ordering some inquiry with a view to ascertain whether it is practicable to effect a saving under this head.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The sum of £140,000 does not represent the total Estimate for 1903–4, which, with Supplementary Estimates, after deducting Appropriations in Aid, came to about £157,000. There is no reason to suppose that the sums provided for 1904–5 will be insufficient. Every effort is, and will be made to cut down expenditure under this head, and there would appear to be no need for a special inquiry.

Army—Ammunition Vote.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will explain why an increase of £40,000 in the cost of small-arm and machine-gun ammunition is anticipated for the year 1904-5, as shown under Vote 9, Sub-head C, of the Army Estimates.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The difference is due to increase of repayment services which will be found under Subhead M of this vote.

Donegal Militia—Gunner Murphy's Case.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any allowance will be made to the Longford Board of Guardians in respect of the maintenance of Gunner Murphy, who was wounded by an accident at the last Donegal Militia training, and has been an inmate of Longford Union since October, 1903.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, Sir. Gratuity for injuries granted under paragraph 592 of the Militia Regulations is not issued concurrently with maintenance at the public expense.

Asiatics in the Transvaal.

MR. SEYMOUR ORMSBY-GORE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will say whether he has received from Lord Milner any estimate of the number of Asiatics proposed to be introduced into the Transvaal; and whether Asiatics recruited from British territory will be permitted to work in the Transvaal mines.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): I have received no definite estimate from Lord Milner, but for the present the introduction of these labourers must admittedly be of the nature of an experiment. It is not proposed to recruit British Indians for the mines, but if any Chinese British subjects desire to go, they would be permitted to do so.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): Will the right hon. Gentleman reconsider that decision with a view to facilitating the exportation to South Africa of natives of Asia Minor from the neighbourhood of Park-lane and Throgmorton Street?

[No answer was returned.]

Chinese Labour in Rhodesia.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any proposals have come to his notice for introducing Chinese labourers into Rhodesia.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The British South Africa Company and the Rhodesian Land and Mine-owners' Association have asked that permission may be given for the introduction of Chinese labourers under the Southern Rhodesia Ordinances No. 18 of 1901 and No. 3 of 1902. The request is under consideration.

Asiatic Labour in British Crown Colonies.

MR. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in any of the legislative Acts passed during the last thirty years dealing with immigrant Asiatic labour in British Crown Colonies, there are any cases of the introduction of the system of confining the coolies in compounds as proposed in the Transvaal; and, if so, in which Acts.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The answer is in the negative, but the hon. Member will see from the Parliamentary Paper of 7th December, 1900, that in Trinidad, for instance, and British Guiana, indentured immigrants are bound to reside on the plantation to which they are indentured and in dwellings assigned to them by the employer.

Chinese Labourers' Wives.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he now proposes to secure that the regulations to be framed under the Transvaal Imported Labour Ordinance shall provide that any Chinese labourer who desires that his wife should accompany or follow him to the Transvaal shall have the right to have her conveyed to the Transvaal at the cost of the persons to whom he himself is indentured.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have given very definite pledges on this topic, to which I intend to adhere.

Chinese Labour in the Transvaal.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether there is any Ordinance now in force in any British Crown Colony which prohibits indentured Asiatic labourers from engaging in any occupation other than unskilled labour; whether there is any Ordinance providing for the compulsory repatriation of such labourers on the termination of their indentures; and whether any Ordinance, other than that in force in Trinidad, renders such labourers liable to penalties if they are found away from the premises of their employer without a permit.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I may refer the hon. Member to the Parliamentary Paper of 7th December, 1900. In answer to the first paragraph of the Question there is no such Ordinance in the Crown Colonies. In answer to the second paragraph, there is no Ordinance in the Crown Colonies compelling the repatriation of indentured labourers on the termination of their indentures. In answer to the third paragraph, the Immigration Ordinances of all Crown Colonies provide that an indentured immigrant must everywhere reside in dwellings assigned to him by his employer, and absence without a pass and desertion are punishable by fine or imprisonment.

Johannesburg Free Churches and Chinese Labour.

CAPTAIN BAGOT (Westmoreland, Kendal): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give any information with regard to the attitude recently adopted by the Free Churches at Johannesburg on the question of the importation of indentured Chinese labour.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have no official information as to the attitude of the Free Churches at Johannesburg, but according to a telegram published in *The Times* of the 7th inst., the Witwatersrand Church Council at a meeting embracing representatives of the Baptist, Congregational, Presbyterian, and Wesleyan Churches of Johannesburg and district passed on the 5th inst., by thirty votes to one, the following resolution:—"That, while expressing no opinion on the economic questions involved, this meeting strongly deprecates the Free Church Council's agitation against Chinese labour, and thinks that fuller knowledge will modify the latter's views regarding the conditions of service, which are voluntary and similar to conditions which have long prevailed in South Africa. The meeting suggests that the Free Church Council's efforts should be directed to securing perfect freedom for Christian work among the Chinese."

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman give us the terms of the resolution passed by the Free Church Council?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Wages on the Rand.

CAPTAIN BAGOT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the fact that the rate of wages paid to the Kaffirs working on the Rand was reduced after the war, he will state whether those reduced wages are still being paid; or, if not, what is the rate at present as compared with the reduced rate, and also as compared with that previous to the war.

MR. LYTTELTON: I would refer the hon. Member to the mining engineer's figures given at page 202 of Cd. 1895, and to the figures in Exhibit 1 following after page 671 of Cd. 1897, which give the rate of wages and show that a higher rate is now paid than after the war.

MR. FLYNN (Cork Co., N.): Has the right hon. Gentleman any objection to answer the Question on the Paper as to the present rate compared with that previous to the war?

*MR. LYTTELTON: I think, Sir, speaking from memory, that the rate of wages before the war was 49s. 9d., while the present rate is 54s.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) asked whether it was not the fact that wages were halved, or nearly halved, immediately on the conclusion of the war.

*MR. LYTTELTON: Immediately after the conclusion of the war, when the country was suffering, the wages were 33s.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight) asked whether wages were not reduced by 30 per cent. in 1897.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I cannot carry the wages in my head for more than three or four years. My impression is that my hon. and gallant friend is right.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): What increase of wages will the Chinese get for being deported?

[No answer was returned.]

Transvaal Excise Duty on Dynamite.

MR. MARKHAM: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether an Excise duty is levied on dynamite manufactured by the De Beers Company entering the Transvaal equal to the coast duty levied on British manufactured dynamite.

MR. LYTTELTON: No, Sir.

MR. MARKHAM: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, replying to many Questions of this sort a year ago, always replied that the matter was under consideration. As this monopoly has now been in force for eighteen months, can the right hon. Gentleman not arrive at a decision with regard to it.

MR. LYTTELTON: The conditions have changed. The question of railway rates affects the matter very closely.

Rawal Pindi Railway.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the sanction of the Secretary of State in Council has been given to proposals, lately formulated by the Indian Government, whereby the railway on two-feet six-inches gauge, planned to start from Rawal Pindi and to run along the frontier south-westward as far as the border station of Bannu, would be changed over the greater part of the line to a sixty-six-inch gauge, with heavier bridge and other works; and, if so, will he state what is the estimated increased cost that will be incurred if such a change should be made in the plan of this military railway, and what is its total length of mileage.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The railway referred to by the hon. Member comprises a section from Rawal Pindi to Kushalgarh (seventy-nine and a quarter miles) which has been open since 1881, and was constructed on the broad gauge. The extension of this line across the Indus towards Bannu has been carried out as far as Thal on the two-feet six-inches gauge. But the adoption of this gauge for the section from Kushalgarh to Kohat was only a temporary measure, and it was decided last year to convert the line to the broad gauge, and to construct a permanent bridge over the Indus at Kushalgarh in place of the temporary arrangement hitherto provided for crossing the river. The conversion of the Kohat-Thal section has not yet been decided upon. The length of line from Kushalgarh to Kohat, which is to be converted to broad gauge, is 33·1 miles, and the cost of the conversion is estimated at Rs. 1,278,626. The cost of constructing the bridge is estimated at Rs.1,167,191. The length of the two-feet six-inches line from Kohat to Thal is 58·12 miles.

British Indian Labour—Repatriation Regulations.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if all indentures under which labourers from British India are employed in various British possessions contain provisions for repatriation; whether these provisions have always been strictly enforced; and, if not, will he state in how many instances labourers have been allowed to become free settlers, with the number thereof in each colony.

*MR. BRODRICK: Except in the cases of Indian labourers in Mauritius and in the Straits Settlements, all indentures under which such labourers are employed in British possessions contain clauses regulating the grant of return passages to India. But if my hon. friend's Question is to be understood as referring to compulsory repatriation, then my answer is that this is in no case provided for in the indentures, except in Natal, where the labourer is bound at the end of his term either to re-engage or to return to India. I have no reason to think that the various provisions contained in the indentures of labourers in the different colonies are not strictly observed. As to the number of labourers who have settled in British colonies, I have no complete statistics; but I believe that it is considerable.

MR. MARKHAM: Is it not the fact that Indian coolies in Natal are allowed to re-engage and stay in the country on paying a poll tax?

***MR. BRODRICK**: I must ask for notice of that.

India—The Official Secrets Bill.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will place on the Table of the House the Draft of the Official Secrets Bill of the Government of India, as amended in Committee; and whether he intends giving the House an opportunity of expressing its views on the measure before giving his final sanction to it.

***MR. BRODRICK**: A copy of the Indian Official Secrets Bill, as amended by the Select Committee, was published in the *Gazette* of India for February 6th, which my hon. friend will find in the library of the House. The Bill has now been passed without a division through its final stage, and has become law. It requires no sanction from me; but His Majesty the King, has, of course, the power of disallowing this or any other Indian Act, upon the advice of his Ministers, if he should think fit to do so. I will lay a copy of the amended Bill as soon as I receive it.

Manufacture of Army Equipments in India.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will consider the expediency of communicating with the Secretary of State for War, with a view to secure the manufacture at the Government ordnance factories in India of some of the new Army equipments required for service in that country.

MR. BRODRICK: The Government of India are at present taking steps for the manufacture in India of horse and field artillery guns and mountings, and rifles, and the factories at Cossipore, Jubbulpore and Ishapore are being equipped with the most modern machinery for the purpose. The principle of making India as far as possible independent of assistance from home in the matter of war material has been pursued by the Government of India during recent years. All equipments other than guns and rifles are already manufactured locally.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman make the same suggestion as regards Ireland?

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Will this manufacture of artillery not clash with what is being done in this country for India, as explained by the Secretary for War?

MR. BRODRICK: The factories are not equipped for the provision of the guns which the War Secretary has put at the disposal of the Indian Government.

Constitution of the Committee on the Indian Official Secrets Bill.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state how many Government officials and how many non-officials were on the Committee on the Indian Official Secrets Bill; and, seeing that the Committee consisted mainly of Government officials, will he say if any non-official members were in favour of the measure, and, if any, how many.

MR. BRODRICK: The select Committee consisted of five officials and four non-officials. All the members of the Committee signed the Report in favour of the measure; but three of the non-official members dissented in regard to two points in the revised draft.

Indigent Europeans at Mombasa.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he is aware of the fact that there is no other provision at Mombasa for indigent Europeans but the gaol and labour till they have earned enough to pay their passage out of the country; and whether, under such circumstances, British subjects who are not possessed of a certain amount of capital, or who may be under engagement, will be prohibited from landing, and that foreign Powers who possess certain treaty rights will be notified of the Law as applied to British subjects so that they may inform their own subjects of the prospect before them if landed destitute in East Africa.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): No special provision outside the gaol is made for destitute Europeans at Mombasa, and His Majesty's Commissioner will be directed to consider whether any steps can usefully be taken to give publicity to the fact. We have no evidence that the circumstances are such as to call for special legislation.

Belligerent Ships in the Suez Canal.

MR. RENWICK (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether precautions have been taken to prevent the sinking in the Suez Canal, intentionally or otherwise, of vessels belonging to either of the Powers at present at war in the East.

EARL PERCY: The free navigation of the canal is provided for by the Convention of 1888, Article IV. of which stipulates that no act of hostility, nor any act having for its object to obstruct the free navigation of the canal, shall be committed in the canal, and its ports of access. Russia is a party to this Convention, and though Japan is not one of the signatories His Majesty's Government have no reason to suppose that Japanese vessels would act otherwise than in accordance with its principles. In addition to the standing navigation regulations to which captains of ships bind themselves to conform, Rule 4 of the Regulations promulgated by the Egyptian Government on the 10th ultimo requires that every belligerent war-ship shall pass through the Suez Canal in the shortest time possible, and without stopping, except in case of necessity, or by order of the canal authorities.

The Chinese War Indemnity.

*MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether payment has yet been made by the Chinese Government of Britain's share of the Chinese war indemnity, estimated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1902 at £6,000,000 sterling; and, if not paid, whether any steps are being taken to secure payment thereof in the present financial year.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The indemnity is being paid by annuities extending over a period of thirty-nine years. The instalments of the British share are for the present being applied, as received, in discharging the private claims of British subjects.

*MR. McCRAE: Will the right hon. Gentleman apply the money, if there is any balance, to the reduction of the Floating Debt, according to the promise of his predecessor?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The money is being applied to the satisfaction of private claims at the present time. Therefore there is no opportunity of considering the allocation of any further sum.

*MR. McCRAE: The predecessors of the right hon. Gentleman said the money being expended on account of the war, when repaid, would be applied in redemption of borrowings. May I ask—

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! Notice had better be given of any further Question.

South African Railway Debt.

*MR. AINSWORTH (Argyll): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will say who is responsible for the collection of the £1,250,000, admitted by Lord Milner to be due to Great Britain on account of the Imperial Railways of South Africa; whether he will lay upon the Table Lord Milner's statement on the subject; and say in what way the money will be recovered.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Correspondence is still proceeding on this matter, and, until it is completed, I can add nothing to the information which I have already given to the House.

Metric System in the United States.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the

President of the Board of Trade whether there exist any Papers showing the extent of the adoption of any metric system in the United States; and, if not, whether, with a view to the consideration of any measure upon the subject which may reach the House in the latter part of the present session, he will move the Foreign Office to cause a Return to be prepared and laid before Parliament, giving recent information upon the subject.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): I am in communication with the Foreign Office with the view of obtaining such a Report as the right hon. Member suggests.

Scottish Fishery Board—Grant for Piers and Harbours.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland in view of the fact that only £3,000 per annum is placed at the disposal of the Scottish Fishery Board in aid of the construction of piers and harbours, will he consider the expediency of arranging for a sum sufficient to meet the requirements of those districts in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland which are outside the Congested Districts Board area.

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this Question. I should be glad if the figure available for the purposes referred to by the hon. Member were more considerable, but I fear there is under present circumstances no prospect of the augmentation to the fund suggested by the hon. Member.

Mr. WEIR: Will the hon. and learned Gentleman approach the Chancellor of the Exchequer with a view of getting an increased grant?

[No answer was returned.]

Irish Land Purchase—Stamp Duties.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that, notwithstanding the declarations on the subject made by him in debate on the Irish Land Bill last session, it is still the practice of the Inland Revenue Authorities in Ireland, on the sale of their holdings by tenant purchasers, to require stamp duty to be paid on the conveyance on the unpaid balance of the loan due to the Irish Land Commission, as if that sum formed portion of the consideration money on the sale; and whether this matter will be dealt with in the Bill to amend the Land Act.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): Until I read the hon. Member's Question, I was not aware that the practice he mentioned had, as he alleges, been adopted, nor do I know what particular declaration he refers to. I have asked for a report upon the matter, and pending the receipt of that report I cannot reply to the earlier portion of his Question. In reply, however, to the last query, I beg to say that the provision he suggests would be outside the scope of the Bill to be introduced to-day.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The question was raised in the debate last July?

Mr. ATKINSON: I will look it up.

Irish National Schools—Teaching the Irish Language.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether as the recent instruction, issued by the National Board of Education in Ireland to their inspectors that no teacher of a national school the reports upon which fall below the standard good will be recognised to earn fees for the teaching of an extra subject, is calculated to interfere with the teaching of Irish in schools classed as fair or very fair, he will recommend the modification of this instruction so that children may not be precluded from learning the Irish language.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Wyndham, Dover): The recent circular of instructions does not in any way interfere with the teaching of Irish during school hours. It has reference to its teaching as an extra subject outside the ordinary school hours, for which a special fee is payable. With this aspect of the circular I dealt very fully in answer to a Question put to me yesterday by the hon. Member for West Kerry.†

Irish School Buildings.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when it is proposed to introduce the new plans and estimates for the building of teachers' residences and schools in Ireland; whether he is aware that it is now nearly six years since plan VIa. was condemned as inadequate, and when it is proposed to give effect to the repeated promises to increase the estimates in respect of this plan.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I must refer the hon. Member to the reply to the similar Question addressed by him on the 26th May last to the Secretary to the Treasury,‡ to which reply I have nothing at present to add.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: Has nothing been done since then?

Mr. WYNDHAM: The Report is under consideration.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: You have been waiting a long time.

Fair Rent Appeals in North Tipperary.

Mr. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, in view of the fact that the Head Land Commission for the hearing of appeals for the fixing of fair rents has not sat in the district of North Tipperary since January, 1901, and that there are a number of cases still listed for hearing, he will see his way to arrange for the next sitting of the Court at an early date.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The last sitting of the Commissioners was in November, 1902. It embraced all appeals from the district lodged prior to January, 1901. The Commissioners will arrange a further sitting at as early a date as possible, having regard to the claims of other districts.

Irish Equivalent Grant.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that twenty county councils, and over 100 other representative bodies in Ireland, have passed resolutions praying that the equivalent grant should be used to improve the condition of national schools; and whether he will give this matter his consideration.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The allocation of the grant has been carefully considered, and can be discussed on the Estimate shortly to be introduced.

Technical Instruction in Kerry.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain why the National Board refuses the use of national schools in Kerry for technical instruction under the county council, as there is no interference with the working of the school as an ordinary day school.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The Board has not refused to sanction the use of vested schools for the purpose mentioned, provided the manager gives a guarantee that the ordinary school work will not be allowed to suffer, and that any damage done to the premises or furniture will be made good by the County Committee for Technical Instruction. The Commissioners exercise no control over the use of non-vested schools except during school hours, and the managers have the right to grant the use of the buildings subject to the intervention of the Commissioners in cases leading to contention or abuse.

Trinity College, Dublin—Appointment of Provost.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether there is any legal disability which prevents the Crown from appointing a Roman Catholic as Provost of Trinity College, Dublin; if not, why, as the office is in the gift of the Government, no Roman Catholic has ever been appointed; has his attention been called to the recently expressed desire of the

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* See page 460.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxxii., 1791.

Fellows to attract Roman Catholic students; and will he ascertain if the appointment of a Roman Catholic would be welcomed by them.

MR. WYNDHAM: So far as I have been able to ascertain no legal disability is opposed to such an appointment. The reply to the third inquiry is in the affirmative. In respect to the second and fourth, I must respectfully decline to discuss the methods followed, in the past or the present, to select the most eligible candidate for this important appointment by the Crown.

MR. T. M. HEALY: When will the Protestant it is intended to appoint be appointed?

MR. WYNDHAM: At an early date.

Lucan Estate—County Mayo.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the cause of delay in the sale to the Congested Districts Board of the Lucan Estate, in the parish of Kilmeena, near Westport, county Mayo; and whether, seeing that the emigration season is setting in, he will use his influence with the Board with a view to the speedy purchase of this estate, and its division among the inhabitants of the surrounding district who are in need of larger holdings.

MR. WYNDHAM: It is believed that the solicitor for the vendor will be able to complete the sale of this estate without delay. When this has been done it will be resold by the Board to the tenants.

Rent Reduction in County Cork.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the dissatisfaction among the tenant farmers in Cork county, with reference to the reductions given by the Creon Sub-Commission on applications to fix second-term rents on the Kingston and other estates; and if he will explain why the percentage of reduction on second-term rents fixed during the quarter ending December last is only 14 per cent. in Cork county, while it is 22 per cent. in county Down; and whether he is aware that many tenants are deterred from entering the Court on account of the action of the Sub-Commission.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have no information on the matters alleged in the Question. The percentages of reduction in rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners vary with the varying circumstances of cases, holdings and districts, and an appeal against their decisions is open to the parties who feel aggrieved.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork County, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman say on whose recommendation these Sub-Commissioners were appointed?

MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir.

Queen's College, Cork.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland during how much of the year is the President of the Queen's College, Cork, in residence; whether his absence from Cork is in violation of the regulations on the subject contained in the charter of the college; and why the regulations in force in the Queen's Colleges of Galway and Belfast are not observed in Cork.

MR. WYNDHAM: The President of the Queen's College in Cork, who is at the present, and has been for some time, under medical treatment, has made it a rule to be in Cork during term except when public business connected with the National Board of Education, or business connected with the Royal Univerity, or his health, has obliged him to be elsewhere. His absence from Cork is not in violation of regulations.

MR. FLYNN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this President spends most of his time at Munich?

MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir

MR. FLYNN: It is the fact.

Mr. Daly, of Dunsandle, and his Tenantry.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the relations which existed between Mr. Daly, of Dunsandle, county Galway, and his tenants; whether he is aware that complaints have been made to the constabulary authorities of the firing of shots at night in the district, and that a constabulary patrol caught a police pensioner, named Hansberry, who is employed by Mr. Daly as bailiff, in the act of firing on the public road between the hours of 9 and 10 p.m. on the night of the 17th February; and, if so, whether, in the interest of the peace of the district, he will arrange that this man shall not have a licence to carry firearms.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I am informed that the relations between Mr. Daly and his tenants have improved. No complaints have been made to the police in respect of the firing of shots at night in the district, but on the night of the 17th February they detected Hansberry in the act of discharging a gun on the public road. He was prosecuted and fined. Further inquiry is being made in the matter.

Constable Walsh of Rostrevor.

Mr. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now state if Constable Walsh has denied having stopped a lady visitor in Rostrevor, and having insisted on reading to her in the street certain passages from the Bible; if so, whether the lady referred to has been, or will be, afforded an opportunity of identifying him; whether any other charges of engaging in religious controversy have been preferred against him; and whether it is still proposed to retain this policeman in Rostrevor.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The constable denies having acted in the manner suggested in the first part of the Question. I am not aware that the lady referred to asked to be afforded an opportunity of identifying the constable who so addressed her. She informed the police she would be unable to identify him. If she attends at Rostrevor every opportunity will of course be given to her in the matter. No other charges of engaging in religious controversy have been preferred against Constable Walsh. The answer to the concluding inquiry is in the affirmative.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Is it not the fact that this constable, being wiser than his superior officer, has applied for a transfer? Will his application be granted?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Head Constable Moore, Royal Irish Constabulary.

Mr. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it has yet been ascertained if any extra remuneration is due to Head Constable Moore for temporary duty in Greencastle, county Antrim; whether he has now been stationed there for eight months; whether assurances were given by the City Inspector, by the Inspector-General, and by the Chief Secretary that the appointment was only a temporary one; and whether he can state when this constable will be recalled.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The Head Constable is not entitled to any extra remuneration. I have answered the last part of the inquiry in reply to a Question of the 2nd inst. by the hon. Member for North Kilkenny†.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Were not assurances given by the Chief Secretary and by the Inspector-General of Constabulary that the appointment was only a temporary one. The right hon. Gentleman has not said when he will be recalled.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I have answered that Question four or five times.

King Estate, County Wexford.

Mr. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the tenants on the King Estate, county Wexford, agreed to purchase their holdings in the Land Judge's Court, previous to the passing of the

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxx., 1480.

Land Act of 1903, at from eighteen to twenty years purchase, and that the landlord accepted this offer; that, owing to a mistake in the maps, the sale was postponed, on the understanding that the tenants should not suffer by the postponement; and, if so, whether, as the landlord is now demanding twenty-two years purchase, with the bonus, he will direct the Estate Commissioners to arrange that both landlord and tenant will stand by their former agreement.

MR. WYNDHAM: The tenants did agree to purchase their holdings on the terms mentioned. The agreement, however, was not made with the landlord, and was, as in all other cases, provisional upon its acceptance by the Land Judge, after hearing all parties concerned. It is not the fact that the matter was adjourned on the understanding suggested in the Question, but the tenants' counsel expressed a hope that the tenants would not suffer by the postponement. The matter will come again before the Land Judge on Monday next, by which time it is believed an agreement will have been come to which the Court can sanction.

MR. FFRENCH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Mr. Justice Ross stated publicly in Court that the tenants should not suffer by the adjournment of the sale. Is there any way of inducing Mr. Justice Ross to keep that promise to the tenants?

MR. WYNDHAM'S reply was inaudible.

Justice Ross's Court.

MR. FFRENCH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a great deal of time is taken up in the Land Judge's Court with questions relating to boundaries, rights of way, turbary rights, and small charges on an estate; and whether the Government would consider the advisability of appointing another of the Irish Judges to deal with these minor matters in order to allow Mr. Justice Ross to give more time to the 40th Section of the Land Act of 1896, and the 7th Section of the Land Act of 1903, so as to remove the congestion in his Court.

MR. WYNDHAM: A marked diminution has been effected in the amount of business in the Land Judge's Court. The amount of the gross rental returnable to the Court in recent years has been reduced by one-half, a result mainly attributable to the extensive sales effected under the Land Purchase Acts. The reply to the latter part of the Question is therefore in the negative.

MR. FFRENCH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that five days a week and a portion of the sixth are taken up in this Court by disputes on these minor matters. Seeing that so many Irish Judges have been presented with white gloves recently, will the right hon. Gentleman appoint one of them to do this work?

MR. WYNDHAM: I do not think that the course suggested would really expedite matters.

Congested Districts Board—Purchase Rules.

DR. AMBROSE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the sale of certain estates to the Congested Districts Board has been delayed owing to the non-publication of the rules for carrying out such sales under Section 79 of the Land Act of 1903; could he explain the cause of the delay in publishing those rules; and can he say when they will be published.

MR. WYNDHAM: The rules have been drafted and are before the law officers. They will be published very shortly.

Labourers Cottage Schemes—Costs.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the costs of schemes under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts are considerably increased by stamp duties payable on the contracts to build, which requires a 10s. stamp, though a similar contract by a private individual or a limited liability company could be so entered into as only to require a duty of 6d.; on the bond securing the contract;

on the conveyance of the tenant's interest in each site; on the conveyance of the landlord's interest in each site; on the registration of each conveyance in the Registry of Deeds, when a fee of 10s. 6d. each at least is payable; on registry searches on examining the titles to each plot, which may run up to a very substantial sum; and when the plot is acquired from a tenant purchaser fees for registering the conveyance, insurance fund, opening a new folio, and taking out new land certificate, which may amount to about £1 10s. for each cottage; and whether, in his proposed Bill, he will provide for the same exemption from stamp duties under the Labourers Acts as now exists under the Land Purchase Acts.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The facts are substantially as stated in the Question. The Bill to be introduced to-day does not deal with the matter, which affects the financial arrangements underlying the Labourers Acts and other statutes applicable to England. I will look into it before the Committee stage.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Will the title be wide enough to enable Amendments to be moved?

Mr. WYNDHAM: I should say so.

Tobacco Growing in Ireland.

Mr. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Department of Agriculture in Ireland have taken any steps in connection with the growing of tobacco in Ireland during the coming season; and whether any expert has been employed or appointed with a view of giving practical instructions as to planting, growing, and curing of the plant.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The Department of Agriculture has arranged for the cultivation of tobacco on a commercial scale in the county Meath during the present year. No expert has been employed to advise on the cultivation of the crop, but one will be employed to advise on the treatment of the leaf when grown.

Mr. FLAVIN: Why has the county Meath alone been selected?

Mr. WYNDHAM: I suppose because it was considered the most suitable.

Land Purchase—Decadal Reductions.

Mr. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that a tenant has the power, under the Purchase Act of 1891, of extending the period of repayment of annuities from the shorter to the longer number of years and thereby get the benefit of decadal reductions, he can state what the amount of the annuity payable by a tenant would be, and for how many years, who purchased a £20 rental at eighteen years purchase without decadal reductions under the Purchase Act of 1891; and whether he can state, in the case of same tenant who purchased a £20 rental at eighteen years under the 1891 Act with decadal reductions, what number of years his annuity would have to run, and what would be the amount of his annuity for each of the periods over which he is entitled to get the benefits of the decadal reductions, what would be the amount of his total payments and his average annual payments under the extended period of repayment, with decadal reductions.

Mr. WYNDHAM: This information cannot conveniently be given orally, but I have communicated it to the hon. Member, and it will also be printed on the Votes Paper to-night.

Dungannon School Estate.

Mr. DOOGAN (Tyrone, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many years purchase the Commissioners of Education have recently demanded from the Clonoe second-term tenants on the Dungannon school estate, and also the number of years purchase for which the Commissioners a few years ago sold to second-term tenants their Fermanagh estate, and the amount of arrears wiped out.

Mr. WYNDHAM: This Question will be brought before the Standing Committee of the Commissioners at its next meeting on the 18th instant.

Butson Estate, County Galway.

Mr. ROCHE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of

Ireland whether he is aware that on the Butson Estate, county Galway, which is about to be sold in the Land Judge's Court, there is a large tract of grazing land subject only to a temporary Court lease, while the general body of the tenants have only small impoverished holdings many of which are constantly inundated by floods; whether he will take steps for the enlargement of the cottier tenancies, and will the provisions of the Purchase Act which prevent advances of public money to new tenants having no real connection with the estate be strictly enforced so as to prevent the rich grass lands, which it is the policy of the Act to redistribute amongst the smaller tenants, being sold to outsiders.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am making inquiry into this matter, and will ask the hon. Member to repeat the Question on Monday.

MR. ROCHE asked if the right hon. Gentleman would take steps to prevent the landlord getting advances before this was decided.

MR. WYNDHAM: The case is in the Court, and I cannot therefore intervene.

Wexford Harbour.

MR. FFRENCH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Board of Works refused the loan of a suction dredger to the Wexford Harbour Board to remove the silt from the harbour, although guarantees were offered against all risks; and whether, as the harbour is silting up more, facilities will be given to the Wexford Harbour Board to purchase a large suction dredger.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): Yes, Sir. The Board are advised that their dredger cannot safely be allowed to work on the Wexford bar until the channel is deepened. I understand that the Harbour Commissioners have already a dredger, and that the Board of Public Works offered last year to send an engineer to demonstrate to the Commissioners that their dredger is capable of removing the sand efficiently.

MR. FFRENCH: Will facilities be given for the purchase of a large suction dredger seeing that the bar has silted up and that vessels engaged in the cross Channel service have grounded on it?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: We believe the present dredger can do the work if properly managed.

MR. FFRENCH: That is not so.

Blacklion, Cavan, Telegram Delivery Charges.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in the case of delivery of telegrams between Blacklion and Glengevlin, in county Cavan, he is aware that full porterage was charged for five miles without deduction in respect of the three miles allowed for limit; whether this is in accordance with the regulations of the Post Office; and, if so, does he intend to modify it so as to allow for the three-mile limit.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The charge to which the hon. Member refers is in accordance with the Statutory Telegraph Regulations of 1898, and I do not propose to alter the regulations in that respect. I will see, however, whether it is possible to open a telegraph office at or near Glengevlin under guarantee.

Telephonic Communication in County Limerick.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the want of telephonic communication between Limerick and the following towns, viz:—Ennis, Kilrush, Tipperary, Nenagh, Kilkee, Clonmel, and Mallow; and whether, in view of the commercial advantages it would confer on those districts, he will have such a system established.

LORD STANLEY: I have received a letter from the Limerick Chamber of Commerce asking that telephonic communication may be established between Limerick and the other places mentioned by the hon. Member. Arrangements have already been made for an extension of the Post Office Telephone System to Mallow and Tipperary as soon as additional funds have been provided by Parliament for the telephone service, and I am making inquiries as to the conditions on which similar extensions can be made to the other towns.

The Tibet Mission.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will arrange that the House of Commons shall have an opportunity of considering the question of the expedition to Tibet before that expedition makes further advance.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): At the present moment I no not think anything would be gained by a discussion of this question, and I do not propose to make any arrangement as suggested in the Question.

Government Licensing Bill.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury can he say when His Majesty's Government propose to introduce the Licensing Bill; and can he give any indication of its character and provisions.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot fix a date at present for the introduction of this Bill, and, of course, any statement as to its contents should be deferred to the period when it is introduced.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): Will the right hon. Gentleman say definitely whether it will be introduced before or after Easter?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir, I cannot answer that Question. As the House knows, the business of Supply is being dragged out considerably—[Opposition cries of "Oh!"]—quite legitimately, no doubt, but, as a matter of fact, it is being considerably prolonged. I cannot, therefore, give an Answer until we make further progress.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I may assume there is a Bill prepared?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, you may.

THE FISCAL POLICY DEBATE.

Mr. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) asked the attention of Mr. Speaker to a Motion by the right hon. Member for Ripon on the fiscal question, which appeared on the Papers distributed to Members of the House that morning, in the shape of an Amendment to the Motion of the hon. Member for North Aberdeen. He wished to know whether a Motion of that importance could be sprung on the House of Commons as an Amendment with practically no notice whatever. It was said to be what was called a "put-up job." An important and highly controversial subject ought not to be dealt with in that way; if not improper as a matter of order, it was highly improper as a matter of convenience, and he hoped he might be successful in eliciting an expression of opinion that the hands of Parliament ought not to be forced on such a matter. Could not some steps be taken to prevent the House of Commons being dragged into such a discussion?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: The Amendment is in order. No doubt the subject matter of the original Resolution is of great importance as the right hon. Gentleman has said. The Amendment expresses different opinions, which, of course, are also of great importance, and must be if they are relevant to the Motion. The Amendment is relevant and that is the only question I have to consider. It is quite competent on the principal Motion for the right hon. Member for Ripon to propose an equally important Amendment.

Mr. JAMES LOWTHER: There will be no time to discuss it, Sir.

NEW BILLS.

VACCINATION BILL.

"To amend the Vaccination Acts," presented by Mr. Broadhurst; supported by Mr. Thomas Bayley, Sir John Rolleston, Mr. Channing, Mr. Corrie Grant, and Mr. Levy; to be read a second time upon Wednesday 23rd March, and to be printed, [Bill 118.]

TIED HOUSES BILL.

"To provide for the abolition of Tied Houses," presented by Mr. Broadhurst; supported by Sir John Brunner, Mr. Thomas Bayley, Mr. Herbert Lewis, and Mr. Levy; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 23rd March, and to be printed. [Bill 119.]

IRISH LAND BILL.

"To explain and amend Section 48 of the Irish Land Act, 1903, with respect to the payment and application of the percentage provided by the said section," presented by Mr. Wyndham; supported by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; to be read a second time upon Monday, 21st March, and to be printed. [Bill 120.]

LABOURERS (IRELAND) BILL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND, (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): In asking leave to introduce the Labourers (Ireland) Bill I should like to give my reasons for taking the step of introducing it under what is known as the ten minutes rule. Had I followed the ordinary course, it would have been impossible to take the first stage of the measure, I believe, before Easter, and perhaps not before June. I desire to express my regret that, in the circumstances, many Members on this side of the House, who would have wished to take part in the discussion on the Bill, will be precluded from speaking on the subject, a subject in which they feel an exceeding interest. I might have brought in the Bill without any words of explanation, but this would have been open to misconception, and, besides that, I desire to state my reasons for omitting certain provisions suggested to me from many quarters, suggestions in some cases excellent in themselves, but, in my judgment, impracticable under existing conditions, and especially under existing financial conditions. In the first place I have been asked to secure that the period of redemption of loans shall be prolonged and the interest on the loans lowered, but the condition of the money market, not only in England but throughout the civilised world, makes it impossible to take any steps in this direction, and we must await a more propitious time. I have been asked also, to increase the minimum of 1s. of the rate which might be imposed on any county under the Labourers Acts, but the same reason may be adduced, and there are also other reasons. When the Labourers Act was introduced in 1893, the local taxation amounted to £4,250,000, but it now amounts to £6,250,000, and I, for one, do not see my way to add to the burden of the rates of the country. The existing limit of 1s. will produce £12,500,000 in all, and as only £2,700,000 has been sanctioned in these loans, I believe that within that 1s. limit a great deal more may be done, providing the procedure is shortened and cheapened.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): On a point of order, I thought the first Bill to be introduced was the Irish Land Bill?

MR. WYNDHAM: I handed that in. I am now proceeding with the Labourers Bill. Then I have been asked to increase the size of the allotments. I have declined to do so, partly on the same ground, partly because the average size of the allotment in England is three-fifths of an acre, and partly because I could not be accessory to creating a fresh state of congestion. There are grave objections in my judgment to bringing in other competitors for land who would have compulsory powers behind them. What remains to be done, therefore, is to cheapen the procedure. By the first clause we make the representation by six labourers and not by twelve, and provide for a simple statement of the need for accommodation with no formalities attached to it and no risk of being refused on a technical point; by the second clause we enpower the district council to act without representation if no representation is forthcoming; and by the third clause the purchase of land by agreement, and where there is no building a scheme can be arranged without any formal scheme, without any inquiry, and without any Provisional Order. I now come to the pith of the Bill, the scheme which involves the compulsory acquisition of land and which aims at the building of cottages. Broadly speaking, the county council, acting through a standing committee, will take the place of the Local Government Board, and the Local Government Board will take the place of the Privy Council. I hold that the county council ought to come and play an important part, an important administrative part, in this matter. It is the county council who receive the Exchequer grant and which has to see that no one district monopolises the resources available. The county council too is cognisant of the general burdens and charges that are laid on the county, and therefore it is proper that it should play the most important administrative part, and I am confident they are competent to discharge that duty.

I now come to the next stage, appeal from the petitioners. If the county council reject the scheme of the district council there is a petition from the district council to the Local Government Board, and the decision of the Local Government Board, after local inquiry, will define the needs of the locality and the amount of accommodation which should be provided. I now come to an appeal which in certain cases may be lodged, an appeal as distinct from a petition. The appeal under this Bill will be a local appeal to a Judge of assize on a limited issue instead of a metropolitan appeal to the Privy Council in Dublin upon a general issue. There will be an appeal available if the scheme is lodged merely in respect of selection of site to interfere with the demesne or the amenity of the residence, or interfere unreasonably with the user or enjoyment of land in occupation. That is not an appeal against the necessity or amount of accommodation to be provided. By Clause 12 we make a drastic enactment. We say that where the district council fails to put these Acts into operation, the Local Government Board may step in and take their place. Under Clause 13 there is a plan for redistributing the Exchequer contribution on a more equitable basis in proportion to the loans which are outstanding under the Acts. This I believe to be a fairer method of distribution than the present distribution, which is based upon certain arbitrary data, obtained many years ago. Incidentally it will afford relief to those counties which built a number of cottages before 1891. Clause 16 enables labourers who have discharged their obligations under the Labourers Act, who have paid their rents for cottages under those Acts during five or six years, to purchase a farm under Section 2 of the Land Act of last year, but no provision is given in this Bill, and I think rightly, to enable the labourer to purchase his cottage and plot. He would then cease to be a labourer. We hold it is necessary to prevent labourers from coming on to uneconomic land, but we think it necessary to provide a bridge to enable an energetic and successful labourer to pass out of the ranks of the labourer into that of the peasant proprietor. I beg to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law relating to Labourers' Dwellings in Ireland."—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): While I regret extremely that the Bill by a force of circumstances has been introduced in this particular form which prevents discussion, I would like to say that when it was represented to me that we had either to have it introduced in this way or have the Bill postponed until after Easter, I expressed the opinion that it ought to be introduced in this way rather than be postponed, because there was great anxiety in Ireland to see the provisions of the measure. Of course, I cannot express any decided opinion with reference to the value of the Bill, but I am bound to say that there will be very widespread disappointment in Ireland when its provisions come to be known. Of course, as everyone is aware, the chief difficulty in the way of the working of the Labourers Acts in the past has been the cumbrous, lengthy, and costly nature of the procedure; and although the right hon. Gentleman has told us that the object of this Bill is to shorten and cheapen the procedure, I confess that I do not think it has substantially done so as far as I have been able to follow the right hon. Gentleman's observations. It seems to me that so far from shortening the procedure he has added, in the case where there is opposition or contest, another stage to the proceedings. At present the steps are, first, a representation to the district council; then the preparation of a scheme and an inquiry by the Local Government Board, with appeal to the Privy Council. As I understand the right hon. Gentleman, under the new measure the steps, in cases where there is opposition, will be representation as at present or in a simpler form; the preparation of a scheme by the district council, inquiry by the county council, and then a second inquiry on the spot by the Local Government Board followed in the end by an appeal to a Judge of assize. So that, in point of fact, there will be two inquiries instead of one, and there will be an additional stage to the procedure. I confess, therefore, that I do not see in what way the right hon. Gentleman has succeeded in shortening the procedure. With reference to the abolition of the appeal to the Privy Council, that, of course, is an admirable amendment of the law, but the right hon. Gentleman substitutes for that an appeal to the Judge of assize; the appeal, I admit, is of a limited character, but still an appeal to the Judge of assize, for which there is no precedent whatever in the English law, seems to me absolutely unnecessary. Therefore, I think the right hon. Gentleman has not shown in his new Bill that he materially shortens the procedure.

Now does the right hon. Gentleman materially cheapen it? and this perhaps is more important still. The right hon. Gentleman commenced his speech with an apology for not touching the rate of interest. There is no provision which, in my judgment, would so materially facilitate the working of the Act so much as one which extended the period of redemption of the loans. At present loans are repaid by annuities which run from 4½ to 4¾ per cent., and this, coupled with the necessary repairs, means that for every cottage the labourer has to pay about £6 per year. The charge for rent is only 1s. per week, so that the difference, a considerable matter, falls at present upon the ratepayers, and I think the right hon. Gentleman ought to have been able, notwithstanding the present condition of the money market, to extend the period of redemption so as to diminish the amount of annuity payable in respect of these loans. It is not only in this respect that the right hon. Gentleman has done nothing to cheapen the procedure. There is no portion of the cost of the present working of the Act which is more oppressive than the expenditure connected with the investigation of title and the distribution of purchase money, and the right hon. Gentleman has made no proposals to lighten the expenditure in that regard. Another serious item of expenditure is that on arbitration. Under the present system the progress is slow and the cost very considerable, and I think it is regrettable that the right hon. Gentleman has not seen his way to introduce some limitation of expenditure in this regard. In his measure the right hon. Gentleman has not proposed any substantial shortening of the procedure or any substantial cheapening of the procedure either.

With reference to the other proposals in the Bill, I have only a few observations to make. The right hon. Gentleman has made a very interesting announcement with reference to the Exchequer contributions which are at present paid to counties for the purposes of the Labourers Acts. Some counties have not used them at all, some have used only a portion of them, and he proposes to redistribute these in the future on a new principle, giving most to those counties making most use of the Labourers Acts. It seems to me on the first blush that this is a proper proposal, though it is one which will have to be properly discussed. But what is going to become of the existing balances? The right hon. Gentleman only proposes to deal with the contributions in the future, but at the present time there are unexpended balances to the extent of £150,000. What is the right hon. Gentleman going to do with these? Although some of the counties may have a local grievance, I think the majority of the people might support him if he intends to take them and make use of them for the benefit of the labourers of Ireland; but, if he is going to take these unexpended balances away from the counties and devote them to any other purpose, then this is a proposal which I believe will be very seriously discussed and very strongly opposed. There are other provisions in the Bill with which I cannot deal, but I wish to say just one word with respect to a proposal which I understand is in the Bill, and which disqualifies from election to district councils, labourers who are tenants of cottages in the locality.

Now at present they are entitled to be elected. The question was recently tried in the Courts, and it was decided on the analogy of English cases that they were entitled to be elected. And they are, as a matter of fact, elected at present, and if, as I have reason to suppose, the right hon. Gentleman is going to disqualify them he will certainly arouse a very bitter feeling amongst the whole class of labourers and will not certainly smooth the path of his Bill. I will not go into other matters, but will content myself by saying now, as I did at the commencement, that the right hon. Gentleman has sketched a measure which will cause widespread disappointment in Ireland, and I think when we come to discuss it he will find that unless he is prepared to accept very large Amendments in the direction of improving the position of the labourers, he cannot count on anything in the nature of general support from this part of the House.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Wyndham and Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to labourers dwellings in Ireland," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday, 21st March, and to be printed. Bill 121.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1904-5.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 227,000, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at home and abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) in replying to the Questions which had been addressed to him, said he gladly recognised the favourable tone of the debate that had taken place. The criticisms had been limited in number, and not, to his mind, very important in character. He had found support for the ideas he entertained in the speeches which had come from both sides of the House. There had been exceptions, but he was very glad to find that the vast majority of the House were agreed as to the great value of the Report on the reorganisation of the War Office, and as to the desirability of giving effect to such of its recommendations as they approved. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition was the most prominent exception. He ventured once more to express the opinion that, here again, the right hon. Gentleman had got a little out of touch both with the sentiment of the House and the country and with the sentiment of the Army. In his speech he not only pleaded for postponement of any action in connection with the Report, but there was scarcely-veiled criticism of the authors of the Report, and unveiled censure of the views expressed by the authors of the Report. He did not find an echo of the right hon. Gentleman's views in any part of the House. All he could say with regard to the right hon. Gentleman's criticism was that he did not agree with him, and that he did not believe the future would show that such criticism was going to prevail. He had been criticised, not in a hostile spirit, from two quarters with regard to this Report, and the action of himself and of the Government in connection with it. He had been reproached because the Government had been too quick and because they had been too slow. They had been reproached because they had not accepted the Report in its entirety and guaranteed that they would carry it out; they had been reproached, on the other hand, because they had not given enough consideration to the matter, and because they had already taken action which had committed the Government and which had greatly altered the constitution of the War Office. It was perfectly clear that, whatever their *laches* in this matter, these particular criticisms were very inconsistent, and that they could not be found guilty on both counts at the same time. In his opinion, there was here what there was so very often in practical politics, a *via media*, which happened to be the road of caution and of experience. They had been reproached with not embodying in the Estimates all the consequences that might possibly flow from the complete acceptance of the recommendations of the Report. He had given the right hon. Gentleman opposite a pledge to which he intended to adhere absolutely, that if they found that any additional expense would be thrown upon the Army Votes in connection with the administration of the War Office by these changes, he would take the first opportunity of informing the House. He retained the belief that no extra charge of the kind would be entailed; certainly none had been entailed up to the present moment.

They were told they ought to have put all these matters into the Estimates. He went back to the question of dates. The War Commission reported in September. That Report revealed a state of things that made many of them sick at heart. The duty of a responsible Government was to take immediate action to see that that state of things should never happen again. What took place? The Prime Minister almost immediately appointed a Committee, which he and many other people believed was a body calculated to indicate a remedy for the state of things which was disclosed. It happened that one member of the Committee was serving his country many thousands of miles away. He was recalled, and the very day after his arrival the Committee began its deliberations. Within a month, the Committee represented its first Report, in which they laid down that, in their opinion, before the Government went any further some radical changes must be made in the organisation of the War Office. Who was there to dispute that? Who was there in that House who denied that proposition? Who was there now who would be willing to censure their action in adopting that recommendation? He did not believe there were half-a-dozen men on either side of the House who would do so. The Government acted upon that Report, and with, as he believed, universal approval they made those changes in the War Office.

His hon. friend the Member for Oldham had said that the change in the *personnel* of the War Office was not a matter to be undertaken lightly, and that, if they were going to give the impression to the Army that changes were to be lightly made, and that great officers who had served the country well were to be transferred from one sphere of activity of another without adequate reason, it would be doing much more harm than good. He agreed, but he knew his hon. friend would believe him when he said that they were fully aware of the gravity of the work they took in hand. He hoped the view which some critics had adopted, that these distinguished officers had been dismissed from their employment, would not be adopted in that House. These officers had not passed out of the service of their country. They were still either capable of being employed or were employed in the service. One name had been mentioned—that of Sir William Nicholson. He had a great admiration for that very distinguished and very highly gifted soldier, but he did not think that great harm had come to the country if Sir William Nicholson's term of service, which would have been curtailed in four months, had now been extended for six months, and if he were doing what he believed was the invaluable service of superintending the whole of the Intelligence work in the Far East during the present war. He could hardly trust himself to speak of Lord Roberts, from whom he had received the greatest and most unvarying kindness in every period of his life. Throughout the whole of these proceedings, Lord Roberts had been the guide and helper of those who were interested in carrying this scheme into effect. He was consulted with regard to all the appointments and with regard to the officers upon whom the posts should be conferred, and he could not too freely acknowledge the generous, the admirable conduct of Lord Roberts throughout the whole of this matter. He only said this because he was rather moved by what seemed to be suggested by the hon. Member for Oldham, that these changes had been undertaken with undue rapidity and without due cause. That was not so. They felt throughout that they were performing the wishes of the House and the country, and, while the Government attempted to carry them out in the way which would be most effective, they also endeavoured to secure that it should be the way that commended itself most to all those who were concerned. With regard to the changes that had been made, they had to begin with the *personnel* of the War Office by selecting the members of the Council. That involved bringing from South Africa and India two of our most distinguished officers. The Council was not yet fully constituted, three of its members were here and the fourth had yet to arrive. Charges had often been made against those responsible for the conduct of the affairs of the nation in regard to the recommendations of Commissions and Committees, and those complaints had more often been made with regard to Army Commissions and Committees than any other, but when the Government got this information they proceeded to act upon it, and in face of the criticisms of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, he maintained that they had done better to make progress than to wait indefinitely before carrying out what they believed to be right. The process had been carried further than appointment of the Council, they had appointed some of the directors, who were the officers who would carry out the work under the military and civil members of the Council. They had selected these directors, as far as possible, but not entirely. The Chief of the General Staff was not yet in this country, and this selection was to be a direct selection, as the Government were of opinion that those who were to perform the business of the War Office should decide how the business was to be distributed. That did not seem to him to be unreasonable, and did not arise from any apathy on the part of the Government, because they had no interest in the matter.

With regard to the selection and promotion of officers, he said nothing about the selection in the past, but he had always felt that so long as what might be called the promotion centre of the Army was in London, so long was there a danger that selections for promotion would be made, not by those serving in the field, but by those serving in the administration. Under the present scheme the whole of the promotion of the lower ranks of the Army would come from what we might call the circumference of the Empire. It would be seen that the moment the system was adopted a necessary corollary was that an officer should go about from one part of the United Kingdom to another to correlate the different officers of the Army. Army Corps were not like Fleets. Ships could be brought together, and their commanding officers brought under the scrutiny of a single man. That was not so in the case of Army Corps. There might be two officers of great quality in one Army Corps and two of indifferent quality in another, and the tendency would be for the officers commanding the districts to recommend one man for promotion from each district. Yet it would be quite right for the two men in one district to be promoted, and the two in another to be passed over. It was for this purpose that the Inspector-General was appointed. His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught would not take up his duties as Inspector-General until the beginning of May, but he did not think any loss, from the point of view of the public service, would arise through the absence of the Inspector-General for a month from the post to which he had been appointed. It had been said that the Government ought to have gone further, that they ought to give the Committee a pledge that they would accept the Report *verbatim et literatim*. The second part of that Report had not been before the country more than ten days and the last part was not before the country now, yet within two working months of the commencement of the work of the Committee, the reorganisation of the War Office had been begun and great progress had been made.

The Committee did not want his personal opinion of the method to be adopted to improve our officers. The proper body to discuss this question was the Army Council, but the Army Council was not yet completed, and what would be said if he were to come down to the House and produce a scheme as to which, no matter how good his intentions might be, he could not say that the Army Council agreed with it? The Army Council was only just constituted, and the most important member of it, the chief of the general staff, was not yet in England. That being so, was there any relevance in criticism of that kind?

His hon. friend the Member for Plymouth had spoken of his betrayal—for that was what his words came to—of the views which he had so long entertained. His hon. friend reproached him for saying nothing about all those things which he cared for in days when he had less responsibility and more independence. Well, he had worked very hard for many years in the House of Commons with the section of the House of which the hon. Gentleman was a member, and he thought, probably, that the hon. Gentleman was the only member—if, indeed, he was one—of that section who really believed that he had abandoned or changed his views by one jot or tittle. For many years he had worked as hard with regard to another branch of the service, and during the three happy years in which he was privileged to take part in the administration of that great service, he was permitted to participate in changes which, every day, were a fulfilment of the proposals which he had advocated in the years that had gone before. He trusted, therefore, that his hon. friends—whose support he desired and honestly hoped to obtain—though they might criticise his powers and doubt his capacity, would at any rate not doubt his good faith, or think that he was any less anxious for the cause in which he believed in former days. He would only say further of this question of the Report that, though they were to discuss it on other occasions—and he thought they might discuss it with much greater advantage when they had the whole of it before them—anyone who was in the House during the whole of yesterday's debate must know, that it was absolutely impossible for him to pass over the matter without some such reference as he had made to it to-day.

He would ask the Committee to excuse him if he did not now deal with all the subjects which had been brought up in the course of the discussion. It would strike rather oddly upon a foreigner, with his continental view of the importance of an Army, if he were to come into the House of Commons and hear he subjects which were discussed on the important occasion of getting the Speaker out of the Chair on the Army Estimates, at a time when the atmosphere was full of clouds, and when the whole Army question was exciting the people of our Empire almost beyond any other question. Yesterday they discussed tailoring, bottled stout, the needs of the Empire, the cost of stationery, the arming of the field artillery, the headings under which salaries should appear in the Estimates, the Army Medical Department, belts and buttons, and the position of the Judge Advocate-General. He thought that these subjects were capable of being segregated, and that they might with greater advantage discuss the larger subjects apart from smaller; and he would do his best to deal with various matters which had been raised when they got to the individual Votes. Some of the questions were doubtless of great importance, and his hon. friend opposite, the Member for Newington, incidentally touched on one of the most important when he asked why they were discussing these Estimates without any knowledge of what the Army had to do? He would ask whether the hon. Gentleman had ever heard the Army Estimates discussed with any real knowledge of what the Army had to do? They had gone on in that House for years discussing the Army Estimates, not only without knowing, but without attempting to find out what the business of the Army was. It was only recently that that attempt had been made, and he dated it from the formation of the Committee of Defence. He believed that more had been done in that direction since the formation of the Committee of Defence than had been done in any period that he could recollect since he had been a Member of the House. One great step had been taken. The Prime Minister had laid down a policy which he believed was accepted by nine-tenths of the House as to the functions of the Army. That policy was that the functions of the Army were primarily to conduct military operations across the seas, and that we need not anticipate serious danger from an invading force so long as our Navy was kept up to its proper strength. That was an enormous contribution to the solution of the problem.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): We heard exactly the opposite two years ago.

***Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER** said that the hon. Member could not have heard what he was saying. He was saying that since the Committee of Defence was formed a new and most valuable light had been thrown on the problem which the hon. and gallant Member for Newington raised yesterday. He did not think that even now they knew the complete answer, though they had got nearer to that answer than before; but his own opinion was that until they had a professional staff really taught to consider, day by day and year by year, the needs and the dangers of the Empire they would not get a final and categorical answer to the Question which the hon. Member asked. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would go on asking it, for it was the duty of this Government and of every Government to do its best to try and get a succinct and clear answer. If he wanted an answer, however, let the hon. Member support the recommendations of this Report. One of the principal recommendations was that they should create precisely this general staff which they had so long lacked, and have a bond of union established between the two services to an extent which had never existed before. That was what he considered an important and legitimate subject of debate. He did not think that the right hon. Gentleman opposite was always an advocate of what might be called a "thinking department," but he thought the right hon. Gentleman would now give them his support, because they all saw the importance of the proposal. The hon. and gallant Member for Tiverton was afraid that they were going to let loose junior officers in the Intelligence Department upon important State Papers. He might rest assured that that would not be the case, for the proposals were that the heads of the Intelligence Department should in the future, as in the past, be the representatives of the great staffs of the two services on the Committee of Defence. The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean had fairly criticised a portion of the Report which he considered to be inconsistent with the tenor of the remainder of the Report, and which, if taken alone, would certainly not be a correct expression of the opinion of the framers of the Report. The paragraph might have been modified with advantage, in order to express more precisely the intention of those who drafted it; but he believed that if there were a discrepancy, it was a drafting discrepancy only, and that they would find ample ground for agreement in the later paragraphs of the Report, in which the duties of the general staff and the intentions of the authors of the Report in regard to it were made perfectly clear. His hon. friend the Member for Aberdeenshire had spoken of the condition of the soldier, and he would welcome every assistance the hon. Member could give him in improving that condition. One might have thought from the hon. Member's remarks that the recruit was given less to eat than, or food different from that received by, the trained soldiers. He did not get so much pay, but the recruit ate quite as much as, and probably more, than the trained soldier, and it was surely not a very irrational thing to withhold full wages from a boy or man until he was capable of earning them. His hon. friend the Member for Oldham had gone into a great many matters as to which he had great sympathy with him. He had referred to the recruiting of the Militia, the India drafts, and the abolition of the linked battalion system. His hon. friend knew that he agreed with him in thinking that the Army was suffering greatly in all the particulars to which he referred, and he claimed him as a supporter if he were able, as he trusted he might be, to make proposals which commended themselves to his judgment, dealing with some of the evils which they both knew to exist and were equally anxious to remove. He had done his best to confine himself to important questions, and he trusted that he had made the action and the policy, both of the Government and of the War Department, clear in regard to the immediate past, the present, and the future.

***Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN** (Stirling Burghs): The right hon. Gentleman has devoted the greater part of his observations to the question of this Report, but he did spare a little time to speak in slighting language, language of reprehension certainly, to the House of Commons of the manner in which it conducted these debates. He said that we wasted the time which ought to be given to those lofty themes with which he is accustomed to deal—that we devoted it to questions of bottled beer. I do not think that it is worthy of the position which the right hon. Gentleman occupies as Secretary of State to make this complaint. The House is enabled to bring forward anything which it thinks is of advantage to be discussed. Its character is like the description which has been given of the elephant, which is capable of picking up a pin or rending an oak. Sometimes the picking up of a pin may be very important, especially if the pin happens to be in a vital part. The right hon. Gentleman complained also of inconsistency on the part of those who have criticised the treatment by the Government of the Report of the Committee; but there is no inconsistency in the criticism of those who say that the Government has been in too great haste in its publication and yet too slow in their action and in the indications of policy which they have given to the House. The extraordinary thing in this matter is the hurry with which this Committee has acted, and especially the haste with which the Report has been published. What advantage has been gained by the publication of the Report at the time when it is not complete, when the Government have not made up their minds upon it, and when there are other things to do in preparing the Estimates for the year? These Estimates are illusory, for they cannot represent what is to be the policy of the future. The right hon. Gentleman says that the Government cannot say what that policy will be because they would have to consult their new Council and their new officers. That is true; but it is all the more reason not to publish what has been published, seemingly under their authority, nominally, and indeed, as explicitly stated in the Report itself, with their approval, and thus to mislead to a great extent public opinion on the subject. Why this extraordinary haste? Sir George Clark came home at the end of December. Before ten days the first Report was signed; and so on they proceeded at headlong pace. We all know that the Report embodies the views of a certain little knot of so-called Army reformers who have been busy for many years, and of whom the right hon. Gentleman himself is one. They have endeavoured through the Press and otherwise, very properly, to impress their views on the public. But their views are cut and dried views which are capable of being rapidly developed in this way. What was the object of the publication? I remember a friend of mine once saying that whenever a public speaker asked a question we may be perfectly sure that he had furnished himself with an answer beforehand. I will give my answer to my own question at once. The publication was designed to remove from the public the sensation created by the War Commission Report. They said, "Let us get out a revolutionary, sweeping Report; never mind whether it is right or not, let us get it out by all means to occupy the public mind and to get us out of the difficulty in which we find ourselves." There is too much hypocrisy sometimes as to the effect of a policy on the public mind, and the House need not think to deceive itself when everybody knows that it is so. I am not referring to the conduct of the eminent and capable men composing the Committee, but to the action of the Government. These Estimates cannot, it is said, be founded on this Report, and I agree with that view, for it is impossible that the members of the Council who signed the Estimates can either have investigated them or made themselves acquainted with their justification, or even approved the military policy which the Estimates embody. That is what I complain of. I do not complain of the Government for delay, but for not exercising more delay, not with the view of putting off the question or escaping from the necessity of its decision, but in order that they should not mislead and confuse the mind of the country by putting forward as their accepted policy documents which it now appears do not necessarily embody their policy, and then inviting the House to go through what is little more than the farce of voting these Estimates, which do not express the policy which they intend to adopt. I do not think that a word can be said in defence of the action of the Government. Some of the main recommendations made by the Committee are such as I entirely approve, as I have shown in the past by taking steps in the same direction. But if the House examines the Report closely and the things in it, I for one should be slow to give my assent to the sweeping denunciations it contains as to certain branches of the public service which have done great good in their day and are still capable of doing great good, and which this Committee seem to have been so rash as to condemn.

I must now turn to the Estimates themselves, for I have a few words to say to the Committee in regard to them. What is the most remarkable fact in connection with the Army for many years? It surely has been the continuous growth of expenditure. I will take the period from 1897–98, the first year in which there was a considerable spring in the amount of the Estimates and in the size of the Army. The regular Army has risen from 163,000 to 217,000 men, an increase of 33 per cent. The Guards have been increased by three battalions, the Horse Artillery by six batteries, the Field Artillery by fifty-two, and the Infantry by three battalions. The charge for *personnel*, including clothing, housing, and food, as shown in Appendix 19 of these Estimates, has increased in these seven years from £11,800,000 to £18,600,000. I direct the attention of the Committee to the fact that this is an increase of 50 per cent., whereas the force has only increased by 33 per cent. That is a significant and remarkable fact. A good deal has been done in increasing the pay. We are all willing to do anything that is possible to increase the comfort of the soldier, and to make the service attractive to him; but I have always held, and I think I am supported by the best opinions on military matters, that no small increase of pay is at all likely to have much effect in recruiting and in inducing men to enlist. If you want to bring into the Army another class altogether, to improve the character of your soldiers, to tap a different social stratum, then you must double the pay or immensely increase it. If you do that of course you will incur this evil result of paying all that additional sum for many of the men you already get, and this will be a pure waste of money. At any rate we have this increase of 50 per cent. in the cost of the soldier. At the same time, the cost of the Militiaman has gone up from £15 5s. to £20 11s. 8d., or an increase of 33 per cent., and we have fewer than ever on the books, both of men and officers. The cost of the Volunteers has been increased from £1,000,000 to £1,750,000—that is, 75 per cent.; and all these things put together give an increase of £9,250,000. What is the outcome of this great additional expenditure; what have we got for it? These Estimates are said to show a small reduction from what the right hon. Gentleman called the normal Estimates. Some questions were addressed to him as to what "normal" Estimates were, and the right hon. Gentleman said that what he meant by "normal" Estimates were Estimates which would be £280,000 greater than these. He gave that as his answer, and I thought it was exceedingly ingenious. Do these Estimates show a real reduction? Are there no future expenses which have been announced to us, and which we must keep in view? There is the cost of the new rifle. We have not been told how much that will come to. It is not to be commenced this year, as I understand.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The new rifle has been under manufacture for some time, and will shortly be supplied to both the Army at home, and in India. I was misreported in *The Times*, and I have made a correction.

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Everyone must be glad to hear of these improvements, regarded merely from the point of view of the efficiency of the service. But there is the new gun, which does not involve any charge this year, because all the guns of the new pattern are to be sent to India, and paid for by India. But what will it be in subsequent years? Will there not be a large expenditure on this account? Then there are the garrison battalions coming in a short time for their pensions, and other necessary sources of expense to which we are already committed, and which must inevitably tend to increase the Estimates still further in subsequent years. What has been the return for this great increase of cost? There have been some additional Guards' battalions, which are not needed, or at any rate not used, now for the purpose for which they were raised, because the Guards no longer garrison the Mediterranean stations. There have been some highly-trained field artillery raised for the non-existent Army Corps. There have been some Indian battalions—and of those I quite approve—to provide for increase of force in tropical stations; and there is the garrison of 21,500 men for South Africa, to be maintained there at a cost additional to what the cost at home would be of £1,360,000. I shall refer to this by-and-by. What is the conclusion of the whole matter? It is nothing but this—that the cost of the whole Army has been allowed so to increase that the burden has become absolutely insufferable. If I seek to find the cause to which this great increase is due, I should say it was due, in the first place, to a policy of conquest and adventure, and, in the second place, to a disposition to hurry which has led to steps being taken on very insufficient consideration and without really increasing the power of the country. I doubt whether the causes of this £9,000,000 of increase, with more to follow, were really properly weighed in the balance before being adopted. Does the country contemplate such a charge as this as being permanent? Not for a moment. I do not think I should find much disagreement if I said that at the present time the country is sick of war—sick of what I have called a policy of conquest and adventure. This scale of military expenditure cannot be maintained. That is what the House of Commons has in its mind and what it must impress on the Government of the day, whatever Government that may be. And the great expenditure which has been so rapidly incurred can only be reduced by decreasing the numbers of the Army with the Colours.

We must therefore look forward ultimately to the withdrawal of this garrison in South Africa, whose maintenance at the expense of the British taxpayer is an entirely new departure from the established policy of the country. That the garrison is intended to be permanent notwithstanding this established policy is shown by the fact that barracks are being built for it, on the footing, I presume, that it is to be there continuously. I have said that the policy of the country lies in the other direction. It has been laid down, not by one side of the House or by the other, and not by any erratic politician, but after the most serious consideration of all the circumstances, and many years ago, that this country should cease to maintain forces for local purposes unless the colony concerned itself paid for their maintenance. I have some words here of a high constitutional authority on the point which perhaps the House will allow me to read; for this is not a question of some fancy scheme devised by military administrators who found it convenient to withdraw troops from the Colonies. It was deliberately done under the authority of Parliament—

> "Within the past thirty years a fundamental change has been effected in the administration of the British Colonies by the withdrawal of the Imperial troops, previously scattered throughout every part of the Empire, and the consequent devolution upon the self-governing Colonies of the responsibility of self-defence. This reform originated in the Report of a Departmental Committee consisting of Mr. Hamilton of the Treasury, Mr. Godley of the War Office, and Sir T. Elliot of the Colonial Office, appointed in 1859 to consider the cost of colonial military defence. The previous year the military expenditure in the Colonies amounted to nearly £4,000,000, to which the Colonies contributed something under £380,000, and few of the Colonies had any effective Militia or local force of their own. This was followed in 1861 by a Select Committee which made an inconclusive Report. In 1862 the House of Commons upon the Motion of Mr. Arthur Mills resolved without a division:—'That this House (while fully recognising the claims of all portions of the British Empire to Imperial aid in their protection against perils arising from the consequences of Imperial policy) is of opinion that colonies exercising the right of self-government ought to undertake the main responsibility of providing for their own internal order and security, and ought to assist in their own external defence.' Thenceforward this principle was adopted by every successive Administration as the settled policy of the Empire."

We have been told, indeed, that these men are to be maintained in South Africa as a reserve for India. Why, Sir, that is an afterthought. This is a Government of afterthoughts. They waste on afterthoughts what would be better expended on forethought. It has the effect of blinding the public to the fact that this is the direct outcome of the Government's policy. I want to ask the Secretary of State a plain question. What army has Lord Milner demanded for South Africa to maintain peace in the Colonies and to protect them? There was the constabulary, which would have been paid locally, and which, while fufilling the ordinary duties of constabulary, would have been useful as a military force; but the constabulary has been allowed to dwindle. The Indian plea is a mere pretence, and the Indian Government has shown that it is so by declining to accept any responsibility for this increased force in South Africa; and to ask for these 21,500 men as a permanent increase in the garrison of South Africa is to proclaim the failure of your South African policy in one sphere, just as the bringing in of Chinese labour proclaims its failure in another sphere. I protest against hurry in all these matters. I wish to know how the three years enlistment scheme is answering, and whether it is found at the present time to work well with a view to supplying the necessary drafts to the Indian garrison. After so many schemes and so many failures the House ought to demand the fullest information before agreeing to any new departure.

One reference I must make to the Committee on the reorganising of the War Office. Just at this moment, when economies must be enforced, that Report throws a perfectly undeserved slur—and I think a most unworthy slur—on that department in the War Office which is mainly charged with keeping both soldier and civilian within due limits. I saw that part of the Report with great regret, and I am sure that any one who is acquainted from the inside with the working of the War Office — which, though it may have changed since my day, has not changed in this respect—will agree as to the injustice of this summary judgment which is contrary to the published evidence before more than one Committee, and to the opinions of the highest military authorities. It is a slur on a department which I am sure does not deserve it. One other question. The Mowatt Committee's Report and the evidence given before the Committee—ought they not now to be laid before Parliament? The Committee was called into being and conducted its deliberations in the hurry-scurry of the war, when there was not a little alarm lest we should be unable to meet the requirements of the war; and a heavy charge was laid upon the public. A good deal of the Report has been published, but surely now that the war is over there is no reason why Parliament should not have the Report and the evidence before it, as the recommendations of the Committee must be the basis for expenditure on stores and armaments in future. I should expect that its decisions will have to be revised in view of the actual experience of the war down to the close. These are the three definite subjects on which I wish to put questions to the right hon. Gentleman:—Lord Milner's estimate of the garrison required in South Africa, the subject of drafts under the three years enlistment arrangement, and the presentation of the Mowatt Report. The policy of the Government is necessarily in a fluid state to a large extent, but what I complain of is that they have forced public opinion on this matter by the partial publication of this Report before they have made up their own minds in regard to it. The right hon. Gentleman said something to which I entirely demur when he talked of the necessity of the War Office Council formulating some great military policy for this country. It is not the War Office Council or even the Cabinet Council of Defence that ought to formulate that policy. It is the Government itself, it is the House of Commons, it is Parliament. It is Parliament that will fix that policy. Our military policy will necessarily depend on the general external relations of the country, the general foreign policy of the country, and in that matter no help can be obtained from any skilled advisers, however eminent. It is a matter which must depend on the feeling, intention, and desire of Parliament and the country.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): We have had some opportunity during the course of the speech which has just been delivered of estimating the right hon. Gentleman in the double capacity of an Imperial statesman and a War Office reformer; and I confess that neither as an Imperial statesman nor as a War Office reformer has he raised himself in my estimation, nor, I think, in the estimation of those who in cool blood consider the tenor of the advice which he has given the Government and the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman has referred, and he was perfectly justified in referring, to the enormous burden of the Army Estimates. Nobody denies that burden; nobody denies its magnitude, and there is one question, and one question only, to be asked with regard to it, is or is it not necessary? I do not say that means may not be found for reducing it consistently with our full Imperial obligations; but I do not believe that, consistently with those obligations, it can to any very great extent be reduced unless great alterations are made, which the right hon. Gentleman appears to deprecate, in the constitution of the Army. The right hon. Gentleman seems to think that it is possible for this country to alter the amount of the forces available for the defence of this country according to its own humour at the time. I say it is not possible for the country to do that, and that, if the country once begins to consider this question of Army expenditure from that point of view, under modern conditions we run the very gravest peril as an Empire. The right hon. Gentleman tells us that the great cost of the Army is due to a policy of conquest and adventure. No doubt we have recently added to the extent of His Majesty's dominions in South Africa, but that the war which has had that termination was undertaken in a spirit of conquest and adventure is a total misrepresentation of the facts. I do not know how far the right hon. Gentleman thinks the Government of this country ought to submit to His Majesty's territories being invaded before the Government which attempts to repel that invasion is open to the charge of having a policy of conquest and adventure. In that connection may I express my great regret at some observations which fell from the right hon. Gentleman in connection with the South African garrison? I do not precisely understand, I admit, to what conclusion the right hon. Gentleman wished to induce the Committee to proceed; but I am perfectly certain, whether it be easy or not for us in this House exactly to understand the right hon. Gentleman's policy, that that policy will bear a very clear meaning to the Boer party in South Africa. The meaning that they will put upon it, rightly or wrongly, is that as soon as the right hon. Gentleman and his friends have the control of the policy of this country, so soon will they reduce the South African garrison.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): And make the self-governing Colonies pay for the garrison.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Exactly. I do not know how far the hon. Member for Dundee is an authorised exponent of the policy of the Leader of the Opposition, but I accept his gloss. I think that is exactly the interpretation that will be put upon it—that as soon as Gentlemen on the opposite Bench have the control of our policy the garrison will be reduced to a point at which the Colony itself will be able to pay for it. All I can say is that assertions like that——

*Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The assertion is on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. What I referred to was the fact that the necessity which the Government allege of maintaining 21,500 men in South Africa is the fruit of the policy of the Government. It may be true that it is very difficult at present to deal with the result of their policy.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman has again, on behalf of his Party, committed the mistake which has led to great disasters in the past. [Opposition Cries of "Oh."] That is my opinion. He has uttered words which in South Africa will be interpreted, as words uttered from that Bench have so often been interpreted, as meaning that the instant the Radical Party come into power the vigour of our South African administration will be diminished, and immediately the hopes of all those, either in South Africa or in this country, who desire to see the results of the late war reversed will have a chance——

*Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I never said a word to justify any such statement.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: That is where I differ from the right hon. Gentleman. I do not question the excellence of his motives, but I do say that he has used unguarded language, and of the interpretation of that language I venture to say that I am as good a judge as he is.

***Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: You are assisting the Boers to put that interpretation on what I said.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If I thought that, I would at once withdraw what I have said, because, after all, there are much greater interests at stake than a mere controversy across the Table. I am afraid I cannot lay the flattering unction to my soul that it is what I have said and not what the right hon. Gentleman has said which will produce this regrettable result. The right hon. Gentleman in the earlier portion of his speech severely criticised the Government for the course they have taken in regard to War Office and Army reform. When the right hon. Gentleman speaks in this House he always gives expression to a fine crusted old Tory view of Army reform. He deprecates any haste in this matter. There is no change I know of which has ever been made slowly enough for the right hon. Gentleman. I think he misinterprets public sentiment in this matter, and what is much more important, for public sentiment may change from month to month, I think he has mistaken the real necessities of the situation.

The Government found themselves, after the Report of the War Commission, naturally subjected to a great deal of criticism. I think most of that criticism was unjust. I feel confident that an impartial historian in the future will take that view. In my view the period antecedent to the publication of that Report, ever since Lord Lansdowne took office in 1895, has been a period of Army reform on a great scale. It is perfectly true that the Ministers responsible for that Department worked upon the traditional lines that had been handed down to them ever since Lord Cardwell's time, and which had been worked upon, among others, by the right hon. Gentleman. They worked within those lines, and within those lines they carried out, in my judgment, very great reforms—reforms without which it would have been impossible to carry on the South African War in the way in which it was carried on. It is for that reason that I have always thought the criticisms upon my right hon. friend on this Bench and his predecessors are grossly unjust. The impression left on my mind by the War Office Commission was not that any great reform was possible under the existing system, but that the system itself required the most critical examination and revision. We began without one moment's delay to make that critical examination, and carry out the revision. We began, rightly as I think, with the War Office constitution. The right hon. Gentleman has accused us of going too fast. Almost every other critic of my right hon. friends in the Government has accused us of going too slowly. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean and other Gentlemen who have taken great interest in Army matters in this House have taken precisely the opposite line to that which commends itself to the right hon. Gentleman, who has told us that we are proceeding with almost indecent haste, and that time should be given to this House and the country for the elaborate consideration of the whole machinery of the War Office. We took precisely the opposite view. We thought that the time for these lengthy examinations by Committee or Commission of this House, by such bodies as the Hartington Commission, had passed, and that the facts were known. We believed that if we appointed this small Committee to suggest a scheme of reform, we should be able to set to work upon the War Office constitution with a speed and a success which no other possible procedure would give us. The right hon. Gentleman seems to think that we ought to have waited until the whole of the Report of the Committee had been finished and approved by the Government before publishing. I disagree with him. In the first place let me say that the approval of the Government is never one of the conditions under which the Report of a Committee ought to be published. I have never heard of such a proposition being laid down. Was the

Report of the Hartington Commission, for example, never to be made public until approved by the Government?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That was a Royal Commission. This is a small Committee, and we do not even know the terms of reference. It is a small *ad hoc* Committee appointed for a certain definite purpose, no doubt, by the right hon. Gentleman himself.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That the Committee was appointed for a definite purpose is, I hope, not an uncommon peculiarity of a Committee, and the fact that it was appointed by me appears to me to be wholly irrelevant to the argument. Does the right hon. Gentleman suggest that because it was appointed on my recommendation, therefore if I did not like the Report I was to keep it indefinitely secret? The thing is wholly absurd. The Report had to be published whether the Government approved of it or disapproved of it. Whether it was desirable to publish it on the exact date selected for publication may be open to question, but that it had to be published whether we approved or disapproved of it, that is, I think, beyond question. Now the question is, was it desirable to publish it piecemeal? I say it was desirable to do so because it was desirable that we should at once set to work to constitute the Army Council, which was the pre-requisite and condition of further reform; and the first part, which recommended the Army Council, was one which we were bound to act on at once, and, being so bound, we were compelled to publish it. As regards the second part, I do not know that anything was to be gained by its publication at the particular moment; I do not dogmatise as to that; but the Committee were in favour of its publication, and certainly I saw no reason for taking a different view, and I am perfectly prepared to take the whole responsibility for having accepted the suggestion, and that responsibility I do take.

Now, about this second portion of the Report, we are not bound because we have published it to approve of it either in whole or in part. That we do look favourably on the general tenor of it the House naturally will expect. The Committee was our own creation, and its work, I think, deserves the highest praise from the House and the country. It is our own creation, and on it we have founded high hopes for the reform of the Army system; but we certainly do not commit ourselves either to every statement of fact or every opinion or every recommendation which this part, or any part, of the Report contains. I am not quite sure that I do agree—so far as I can form an opinion I should say I do not agree—with some of the criticisms which the Committee have passed upon the transactions and the work that have gone on in the War Office. Certainly, I do not feel bound to associate myself in any sense with those criticisms; but, nevertheless, I do hope and believe that we shall be able to carry out great reforms through the assistance given us by the Committee; and we have given a most effective earnest of our policy by revolutionising already, as we have done, the War Office system within a very few months of the access to office of my right hon. friend and the appointment of this Committee. The right hon. Gentleman opposite stands alone, I think, in his view that we have gone too fast.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is the publication I object to.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Does the right hon. Gentleman want us to act without publishing? I do not understand what he means. We found ourselves face to face with a situation which, partly on the ground of cost, partly on the grounds supplied by the Report on the South African War, in our judgment required thorough reconsideration both of the War Office system and the Army system. Well, we are carrying that out as fast as in human nature it is possible to carry it out. Some Gentlemen talk as if we were putting forward Reports—I think the right hon. Gentleman himself said so—like throwing bits of meat to a dog that might otherwise be disagreeable. If that charge has any meaning it can only mean that we are amusing the public by hopes of reform which we do not mean to carry out. That is the only meaning that such a metaphor can suggest. Considering that we have already revolutionised the constitution of the War Office, what is the meaning of the charge? Some hon. Gentlemen appear to suppose that it would have been possible for the Government and my right hon. friend, before the preparation of these Estimates, to bring forward some new Army system. No one who understands the practical limitation upon the preparation of Estimates can hold that view for a moment. Anything that may be done in the way of reform this year cannot show itself, of course, until the Estimates of next year; but I should be very sorry if this session passes without the Government's being able to make a much fuller statement of their general views upon the Army problem than is either possible or proper at the present moment. Let the House not forget what it too often has forgotten, that the size of our Army depends upon the duties that Army has to perform, quite apart from that imaginary policy of conquest and adventure which appears to haunt the right hon. Gentleman's mind. Apart from that, and looking simply and solely to the question of Imperial defence, I tell the House that no investigation which I have been able to make shows that the military burden of this country can be a light or an insignificant one. It is true, indeed, that many of us have come to the conclusion, after such an examination as we have been able to give to the question, that the invasion of this island by a large regular force, capable of undertaking its conquest, is, if our home forces are kept in anything like an adequate state, and above all if the Navy is kept in anything like an adequate state—for after all this is really a naval question—that invasion is a dream, an illusory danger, and not one of the contingencies against which it would be right or proper to ask this country to make costly provision.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, N.): You did ask it a year or two ago.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: A year or two ago we had nothing to go upon except the system which was then in existence, and the conclusions I have now given to the House are conclusions arrived at by an organisation which was not in existence then. But, Sir, though I do not believe that this landing of a great organised force, competent to quell this country and reduce it by force of arms, is possible, no man can blind himself to the fact that the whole trend of circumstances in the East is to make us a Continental Power conterminous with another great military Continental Power, and that is the dominating circumstance which we have to take into account in framing our Army Estimates; and no Government, I do not care from which side it is drawn, will, I believe, be permitted to ignore the necessities of which I speak, or in the interests of any economy or reduction of taxation, however desirable, to lower our Army strength beyond a certain limit. I think that one of the most valuable results that have followed from the reconstitution of the Defence Committee is this, that we shall have something threshed out and argued out to go upon, and not mere *obiter dicta* as to the number of men required in this or that military operation, vaguely estimated by this or that more or less self-constituted military expert. I hope I have indicated to the House the way in which the general problem of Imperial defence and the Report of this Committee strike my right hon. friend and the Government. That we have been lax in carrying out reform seems to me of all the charges levelled against the Government the most absurd. One great revolutionary reform in three months seems to me not a bad record. Those whose appetite for the revolutionary reform requires the process to be repeated every three weeks appear to me to have an excessive desire for these dramatic changes. I do not think that anybody who knows my right hon. friend the Secretary for War, or who has understood the spirit in which I have endeavoured to address the Committee, will doubt for one moment that, difficult and complicated as are the problems necessarily presented by a voluntary Army and by the military needs of the British Empire, they are being approached by us in no laggard spirit, with no prejudice in favour of the system which we found existing, but with an earnest and impartial desire to turn to the very best account the materials with which the country supplies us, and to make our Army system, if not everything that we could wish, at all events, as far as may be, adequate to the great responsibilities which none who look round the world can doubt may have to be met by this Government or some of its immediate successors.

MR. FULLER (Wiltshire, Westbury) said his right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition had stated that the Committee had been asked to discuss illusory Estimates. The Committee had come down to-day to know what the policy of the Government really was; they expected to hear whether the Cabinet as a whole were prepared to adopt the recommendations contained in the second part of the Report of Lord Esher's Committee or not, and until they knew that these Estimates must be illusory. The Estimates were those of the Secretary of State for India; the policy that of the Secretary of State for War. What the Committee wished to know was whether the right hon. Gentleman had been able to force his view and his policy upon his colleagues. Until they knew that it was impossible to discuss the Estimates on their merits. The Estimates did not show the scale and character of the future expenditure, and it was necessary that that should be known. The Army expenditure was becoming intolerable, and it was the bounden duty of this Committee, and the first duty of the Government, to do what it could to reduce an expenditure which had become an intolerable burden to the taxpayer. Not only were the Estimates illusory from this point of view, but they did not represent the actual expenditure that would have to be incurred. The charge for the Somaliland force was omitted, as was also that for the quick-firing guns with which the Field Artillery were to be supplied. There was no Vote to be taken for those guns, and therefore discussion as to their character and quality would not be in order. The people of this country did not realise what an enormous military force they had to keep. Including the Regular forces at home and abroad we were maintaining an army of 561,000 men, and when the Auxiliary forces were taken into consideration, the military force of the Empire amounted to just over 1,000,000 men. The country did not realise the burden which successive Governments had laid upon their shoulders. It had long been the settled policy of Governments of both parties to maintain in India an army of 300,000, and when the Committee remembered that India was the only part of the world where we could meet a European enemy, and having regard to the fact that we had an Auxiliary force of 700,000 men, he could not help thinking those who desired economy could only come to the conclusion that our armed force was enormously large for the wants of the country. The peace footing of the armies of France and Germany were only 600,000 men respectively, while that of the United States, whose condition more closely approximated that of this country, was 67,000. He would not point out where economy should take place, but his conviction was that a reduction must be made in the direction not of cutting down the expenses of the soldiers and still less of the general staff but in a general and large reduction in the number of the men. If a change of the kind was to be made, and the reduction was to be sufficiently large to have any effect on the Estimates, it must be done on the lines of the Report of the Commission which recommended the abolition of the double battalion system.

SIR HARRY SETON-KARR (St. Helens) said he did not agree with an hon. Member who characterised the burden of these Estimates as intolerable. His object in rising was to ask the Secretary of State for War a question regarding the Army rifles. The right hon. Gentleman told them that the other day that he was producing a new rifle, and that 71,000 stands had already been ordered for the Indian Army. He wished to know if that new rifle was any different from the last rifle which he believed was five inches shorter than the weapon used in the Boer War. This question involved a rather important general point. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman would correct him if he was wrong, but last year when they heard that the new rifle was to be cut down by five inches the impression was conveyed—and he believed it was a correct impression—that some attempt was being made in the form of a compromise between the carbine and the rifle, and it was thought probable that both the Cavalry and the Mounted Infantry could be armed with the same weapon. Some of them were not satisfied that such a thing was possible, and from inquiries which he had made he believed that it was absolutely impossible to have a rifle five inches shorter than the weapon used during the Boer War which could possibly have the same trajectory and the same range as the longer weapon. Did the right hon. Gentleman propose to arm the Infantry as well as the Cavalry with that shorter weapon? He took it that one thing which was impressed on their mind by the late war, was that the rifle with which our Infantry was armed was a most important weapon. If we were to make a mistake in this respect in the case of future wars, our Infantry found themselves armed with a weapon inferior to that carried by their opponents, it might have an important bearing on the result of that war. At all events he believed that it was necessary for the Infantry to have the best possible weapon. He was also one of those who believed that in the past our Army had not been armed with the best weapon as compared with the weapons held by the Continental armies. In his opinion the Norwegian and Swedish, and American rifles were in many respects better than ours. There were two or three points on which he hoped the Secretary of State for War would give a reply. Was the new rifle to be a longer weapon than the last, which they were told was the latest weapon with which our soldiers were going to be armed? If the right hon. Gentleman was going to stick to the shorter weapon was he absolutely convinced that it had the same trajectory and range as the old weapon, which was five inches longer. Could he give them some details of the experiments which had convinced him on the point? Finally, would he disabuse their minds of the suspicion that an attempt was being made to arm the Cavalry and the Infantry with the same weapon? He did not believe the latter could possibly be done because the Cavalry could not carry a large rifle on their holsters, but he would like to have some definite statement on the subject by the right hon. Gentleman, and to have that statement supported by any information that could be given to them.

MR. LOUGH congratulated the hon. Member on being able to bring his mind to the discussion of such details as those to which he had just referred. The effect of the Estimates on his own mind had been to render it impossible for him to consider seriously anything they contained. It seemed to him that the Estimates were a mere blind, brought in to amuse the House of Commons for a few weeks, while the Government completed their revolutionary scheme of War Office reform, without taking the House of Commons into their confidence. Only two days ago the Secretary of State for War had deprecated discussion of the Report of the Reconstruction Committee, and had expressed the desire that the Estimates should be considered without reference to the revolution that was being carried out at the War Office. What example had the right hon. Gentleman set to-day? The whole of his speech had been about that Report, and the Leader of the Opposition and the Prime Minister had spoken about nothing else. The Army Council set up under the Report had signed the Estimates, thereby giving the last touch to the unreality of the situation. The Government ought to take the Committee more fully into their confidence. What was there to conceal in these Estimates? What was the extent of the changes the Government intended to make at the War Office during the year? The right hon. Gentleman had stated that the officers to be newly appointed would take the place of other officers already existing, so that no additional cost would be involved. That was not a satisfactory explanation. The House of Commons ought to have an opportunity of expressing its opinion on the whole situation. According to the Prime Minister, the Army system had already been revolutionised, but what trace of that revolution appeared in the Estimates? The right hon. Gentleman had urged that the time had come, not for publishing information, but for taking action, that we had had too much *obiter dicta* on the matter of Army reform, and that something ought to be done. But this Report was full of *obiter dicta*; there was no evidence; the House was in ignorance of the reference to the Committee; and the Report was the most informal document ever presented to Parliament; and yet in obedience to its commands all these revolutionary changes were to be effected without the cognisance of the House. What were the terms of the reference? Certainly the methods pursued by the Committee were not such as to entitle its decisions to the deference displayed to them by the Government. The Committee decided not to publish the sources of their information; consequently it was impossible to see whether the recommendations accorded in the least degree with the advice or evidence submitted to the Committee. Possibly there would be another opportunity of considering the recommendations of the Committee in a more complete form, but at the present stage the House ought to protest against the incomplete form in which those recommendations had been submitted.

As to the Estimates themselves, how could the Secretary of State justify his action with regard to the Somaliland troops? Conflicting explanations had been given of this matter. The first was in the right hon. Gentleman's own memorandum. There the omission of provision was attributed to the impossibility of forecasting the duration of the operations, and the hope was expressed that the War Office would soon be in a better position to judge of the situation, in which case an additional Estimate would be presented. But that attitude was not maintained, for in the Vote now before the Committee, 10,000 men were put down for Somaliland. The second explanation was of a more satisfactory character, because on Monday last the right hon. Gentleman held out hopes that there might, after all, be little or no further expense in connection with the campaign, that a certain success had been achieved, that if a favourable opportunity offered of bringing the operations to a close the Government would seize it, and that in any case the expenditure and the operations would be kept within narrow bounds. But before voting these 10,000 men the Committee ought to have a clear explanation why no corresponding monetary provision was included in the Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman had claimed that the present Estimates were £280,000 below the normal expenditure. What was meant by "normal expenditure?" He certainly protested against these inflated Estimates being regarded as the normal Army expenditure of the country. There had not been much hope of economy held out. In a remarkable speech at Liverpool the right hon. Gentleman said that people would be crazy to expect much reduction in Army expenditure.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER was understood to say that he was then referring to the ordinary system.

MR. LOUGH was glad to hear the explanation, because the ordinary system was that embodied in the present Estimates, so that probably the new system by which economy would be possible was the system which the Government intended to put into operation during the year. That was the most satisfactory statement he had heard in the debate. After they had had one or two months to consider this Report then the Government might have carried out the reforms they had decided to adopt. That would have been far better than the indecent haste which the Government had adopted in this matter. With regard to the normal cost he hoped his right hon. friend would give them his full mind. How did the right hon. Gentleman arrive at the £29,000,000 suggested in his remarks as the normal expenditure of the Army? There was one great improvement in the Estimates, and that was the table given of the total expenditure of the last ten years on each Vote. To get the normal expenditure they had to go to the period before the war when they were not affected by the war expenditure. The last complete year before the South African campaign was the year 1898–9. The total in that year was then £20,100,000 and that must be taken as the normal Estimate. That figure carried them back only five years, and, of course, some allowance must be made for the natural growth of the Army, and he would place the amount at between £21,000,000 and £23,000,000 at the outside. He thought that would be a much more reasonable sum as the normal expenditure of the Army than the vassum which had been put down in these Estimates. This Vote was chiefly concerned with the men, but it was in the men that economy would have to be effected. He believed that a larger amount of pay had been given to the individual soldier and he did not think that was extravagant. He thought it was possible that two well-equipped and better paid soldiers might be as good as three of the class they had had in the past, and therefore better pay need not necessarily add to the expense of the establishment. He thought means ought to be found for saving as much as they paid away in increasing the pay of the soldier, and that could only be done by a reduction in the total number of men. This country was now maintaining 21,000 troops in South Africa at the cost of over £1,500,000 per annum. The Leader of the Opposition had also shown that the constabulary force had been diminished while the Imperial garrison had been increased. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would tell them the total savings the country might expect when the recommendations of the Committee were carried out.

Mr. YERBURGH (Chester) said the hon. Member who had just sat down had for many years been a consistent advocate of economy, and on this occasion he was quite in agreement with him in regard to the Army Estimates. He hardly thought it was necessary for the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War to tell the House that he still retained in office the opinions he had expressed as a private Member and was prepared to carry them out. He was perfectly certain the right hon. Gentleman would set himself to work with all the energy he possessed to reform the Army. He did not think sufficient attention had been given to the remark made by the Secretary for War that any readjustment of the burdens laid upon the country would be in the direction of perfecting our naval defence and decreasing the expenses of the Army. That appeared to him to be a historic utterance, because it was the first time that a Minister representing the War Office had told them that the claims of the Navy ought to be paramount over the claims of the Army. That was a very wholesome utterance for it was a throwing over of the evil traditions revived by the Secretary of State for India. Anybody who had studied the Army knew that there had in the past been an enormous wastage of about £9,000,000 a year, and in ten years that amounted to £90,000,000. They were also face to face with a great expense by taking the soldier too young, for the younger he was taken the more expensive he was. There was a further wastage in time of war because by employing young soldiers and men physically unfit they were incurring a tremendous waste, and in all these directions, by getting a better article, they saved an enormous amount of wastage. They would also obtain a saving in the number of men employed, by getting only men of maturer years and better physical capacity. He quite believed that they would find in his right hon. friend a strong advocate of economy in the Army. He had told them that too large a machine for the Army would be extravagant, and too small a machine would be a waste of money, but they looked to the right hon. Gentleman to provide them with the machine they wanted.

With regard to home defence this was where the whole question of economy came in. They had heard the statement that the Militia was in a deplorable condition both in regard to officers and men. He very much regretted this because those who knew the Militia would remember how they rallied during the Boer War. He was sorry to hear that the Militia were in this sad state, and he felt sure they would all welcome the words which had fallen from his right hon. friend in which he said that the prestige of the Militia should be established and restored to the position which it held in the past. He agreed with that view, but he would go further, He wished to touch for a moment upon the position of the Volunteers. Everybody in the House sympathised, he was sure, with the position of the Volunteers, because they sacrificed a good deal of time and comfort, giving their services, and they saved other people from having to take their share in the defence of the country. That being so they ought not to begrudge paying liberally for their services to the country. Many people thought that the Volunteers were not paid enough at the present time. He felt bound to say that if they put the extra burdens on the Volunteers foreshadowed in his right hon. friend's speech—and he understood that he proposed to make them a body capable of fulfilling efficiently the duties to be placed upon them—they would have to pay them more money, for they could not ask men depending upon a weekly wage to go to camp and thereby lose money which they would otherwise be earning. It was not fair to ask them to do it. If they asked the Volunteers for further service in order to make them an effective force in time of war they must be prepared to spend a further sum of money upon them. He believed that the real remedy for this question of expense, and the real way to get an effective Army for home defence, was to boldly recognise that on every man was laid the duty of defending the country if he was called upon to do so. The time had arrived when, for the purposes of home defence, every man should be taught drill and the use of the rifle, and so qualified as to be able to take his place in the ranks. The Volunteers and Yeomanry should be swept away, and home defence placed upon a force of Militia drawn by ballot. It might be said by some people that this was an un-English proposal, but it really was not so, because from the earliest days in our history it had been the duty of the freeman to take his place in the ranks. Why should not a man discharge this duty at present as in times past? It might be said that it was against the spirit of a free people, but in answer to that he instanced the admirable Army of Switzerland, which he was told was equal in the matter of efficiency to the other Continental armies. In that country liberty had its home, and any invasion of popular rights would be resented in the strongest way by the people. The Army there was established on a principle which was welcomed by all in the country—rich and poor, and people of every shade of belief. He wanted to know why some in this country should allow other people, because they were more patriotic, to take their place in the ranks, and to bear the share they ought to take in the defence of the country. He was told that under such a system they would get far too many men. He understood that in Switzerland only 52 per cent. of the men were taken, and that the remainder paid a tax. He ventured to say that if we acted on that principle we would get a good and cheap citizen Army such as we wanted for home defence. He believed that we should be eventually driven to adopt the system of compelling every man to serve the country.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he would not have intervened in this debate but for an incident which occurred when the Prime Minister was addressing the Committee. A conversation took place between the right hon. Gentleman and his right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition, which led to the exposition by the Prime Minister of a doctrine which was worthy of the Committee's attention. They were told that the military expenditure in South Africa was £80,000 a week, and £4,000,000 a year. When the Prime Minister was denouncing the Leader of the Opposition for quarrelling with the military occupation, he interjected the suggestion that the new Colonies might at least pay for it, and on that, coupled with the statement of his right hon. friend, the Prime Minister had based a portentous superstructure involving the abandonment by the Liberal Party of what he called the results of the war. Unless the Prime Minister's speech was a mere attempt to make Party capital of a not too respectable kind—and he was unwilling to believe that—he absolutely failed to understand the question of Imperial military defence. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to shrink with horror from the notion that the new Colonies should bear the burden of their internal military defence, and talked of the suggestion as unheard of. The right hon. Gentleman could not have followed the debates on the Navy during the last few years, nor could he have been acquainted with the passage read by the Leader of the Opposition on the constitutional practice of this country, where it was laid down that it was not the duty of the people of the United Kingdom to maintain local armies in the outside portions of the Empire. It was not the case in the Colonies, in India, or even in Egypt. Did the Prime Minister wish to apply this doctrine to India? Would he argue for a moment that this country should pay for the military occupation of that country? If India was taxed for this purpose, how could a different rule be justified for the Transvaal? If the Prime Minister's doctrine became established in this country, the people of India would say, "If you are so generous as to pay for the military occupation of a country which is full of millionaires, how can you ask people with an average income of a penny per day to pay for the Army in India?" That was the meaning of his interruption, but it did not justify the interpretation which the Prime Minister seemed to wish to put upon it, and in place of any defence the right hon. Gentleman set up a false and erroneous doctrine with respect to the duty of this country in Imperial defence. He ventured to prophesy that the effect of the right hon. Gentleman's speech would be very different from what he intended. If a Liberal Government came in it did not follow that the number of troops in South Africa would be reduced. It might be that the Transvaal was too poor to pay, and too disturbed to admit of the reduction of the Army. But that justified his right hon. friend's contention. They had spent £250,000,000 in acquiring two new Colonies with the result that they had to pay £4,000,000 a year for the territory they had captured. The original policy might not have been wrong, but it was clearly not a good investment, and therefore the Prime Minister's extraordinary doctrine would bear fruit that he little contemplated. Was the Secretary for War prepared to announce that no matter how great might be the prosperity that would follow from the introduction of Chinese labour, no matter how profitable the mines might turn out, and no matter how flourishing the country might be, it was the policy of the Government that the poor people of this country were to continue to pay for the Army which protected these industries. If the Prime Minister meant that, he did not understand the problem of Imperial defence. A succession of debates in that House had established the principle that the Colonies ought to pay a share of the cost of naval defence. This question had not been recently raised in regard to the Army, but when they were told that this expenditure of £30,000,000 a year was necessary not for home defence but for the defence of the outlying portions of the Empire, the question of whether the United Kingdom was to go on for ever doing this must be settled one day or other. That was the question which the Prime Minister had brought up in an ill-advised speech and by a hasty Party manœuvre. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"] The Colonial Conference three years ago was addressed by the then Colonial Secretary, who called it, by the First Lord of the Admiralty, and the Secretary for War, all of whom spoke in behalf of the Government of the day. The Secretary for War submitted a proposal that the Colonies should not only pay for their own military defence out of their own resources but should contribute a force to assist the Imperial Army. To that the Prime Minister was a party, and how, therefore, could he justify the words he had used, which meant that it would be a shame and disgrace if the United Kingdom ceased to pay for the military occupation of South Africa? That was the dilemma in which the Prime Minister had involved himself. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War, looking at the matter from a military point of view, ought to be able to tell the Committee whether it was the policy of the Government that, no matter how rich a Colony might be, the people of this country were to pay £4,000,000 a year to the end of time for the military defence of that Colony.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that, in reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, he could not see that any great public advantage would arise from the publication of the whole of the Report and evidence of the Mowatt Committee. It gave minute details with regard to the whole of the fortifications all over the world—their past armament, their present, and their contemplated armament. He thought it would not be advisable to publish such a Report, but it would be possible to publish a very valuable summary of the recommendations, and of what it was proposed to do, and how far what was proposed had been done.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said he had no desire that information of the kind referred to by the right hon. Gentleman should be published.

***Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER** said the nature of the Report was such as he had indicated. With regard to the working of the three years system, he felt a little hesitation in speaking about it because the full effect of that system had not yet come into operation. The men were not called upon to declare their intention of extending their service until the end of the first two years of their period of enlistment. That end would not be reached until the close of this month, and therefore they had no certain evidence as to the extent to which men would continue their service in the Army. He could not say that, pending the light to be thrown on the subject at the end of this month, their experience had been very fortunate. They had had to send out to India men who had not extended, but who were necessary to fill up the Indian drafts. They did not know whether these men on reaching India would extend or not, and there was no doubt at all that if they did not extend, there would be a very considerable additional burden thrown upon this country. He was not convinced of the great value of the system, which enlisted all the men on the basis of a three years enlistment; but he withheld a further expression of opinion until the end of this month, when they would know what was the attitude of the men generally with regard to extension. All he could say in reply to the right hon. Gentleman's Question about Lord Milner and the South African garrison was, that the Government had reduced the garrison to the limit which Lord Milner considered desirable in the interests of the safeguarding of that very large extent of country, under the very peculiar circumstances that existed.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Then I understand that the maintenance of 21,000 men is regarded by those responsible as necessary for South African needs?

***Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER** said that was so. The hon. Member for Dundee in concluding his remarks took all the sting out of them, if they had a sting, when he said that when the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony were rich and prosperous enough to pay for all the troops necessary for their defence, they should pay for them.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Are they not now?

***Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER**: No, they are not. It would be a mere idle pretence, almost a waste of time, to contend that the situation in South Africa was normal or could be a normal situation at present. The Army there was, to a large extent, an army of occupation at the termination of a successful war, and the position of these Crown Colonies could not be compared with that of New Zealand or Australia. The hon. Member said that this was not a commercially successful transaction; but larger views should be taken of these matters than those of mere commercial success. The remarks of the Prime Minister, which had met with the censure of the hon. Member for Dundee, were elicited from him by a statement made by the Leader of the Opposition. What the right hon. Gentleman opposite said was—

> "We must, therefore, look forward to the withdrawal of this garrison in South Africa, whose maintenance at the expense of the British taxpayer is an entirely new departure from the established policy of the country. That it is intended to be permanent notwithstanding, is shown by the fact that barracks are being built for it. To ask for these 21,500 men as a permanent increase in the garrison of South Africa is to proclaim the failure of your South African policy."

Those were the words which seemed to constitute a very alarming statement on the part of a gentleman in the very important position of Leader of the Opposition. He agreed with the hon. Member for Islington that the proper way to economise on the Army was to see that they got proper value for their money. He had a firm belief in the possibility of their doing so. The hon. Member had criticised his comparison of the Estimates of the year with what he called the normal Estimates. What he did was to compare them with the Estimates for the year 1903–4, which amounted to £27,588,000. The figure for this year was £28,928,000, but in that figure were included two sums which were not normal sums at all. One was the additional amount of £930,000 for the extra expense of the garrison in South Africa, and the other was for the completion of the Mowatt programme. If they took away those two figures, they got this year £27,490,000. In regard to the question of the rifle raised by his hon. friend the Member for St. Helens, he must explain that the adoption of the short rifle was due to the advice of his military advisers tendered after exhaustive trials. It was in some respects an improvement on the existing pattern. The old rule was, that two patterns of rifles were issued. In the opinion of the military authorities there would be considerable advantage, and no loss, if one rifle were substituted for the two. The new rifle was four inches shorter than the old, but the range was practically the same. He was not prepared, however, to discuss this subject with so great an expert as his hon. friend, and would only say that the change had been recommended by his military advisers. He thought he had now answered all the specific Questions which had been asked.

Sir EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick) said that the Secretary for War was really responsible himself for any misunderstanding that had arisen with respect to the maintenance of the garrison in South Africa. In his own Memorandum the right hon. Gentleman stated that provision had been made in these Estimates for a permanent garrison in South Africa. The word "permanent" was not in accordance with the speech he had made that night. The essence of that speech was that the situation in South Africa was abnormal, and not ordinary, and that this garrison, therefore, was not a permanent and normal garrison, but one which was kept there because the situation so recently after the war was one which did not admit of the garrison being withdrawn. If that were so, then he did not think there would be much difference of opinion. They all knew that the situation in South Africa was not normal to-day; and if this were regarded as an exceptional and abnormal state of affairs he and his friends were quite prepared to admit that it might be necessary to make provisional arrangements with regard to the stationing of forces there, which were not in the nature of permanent arrangements at all. But then this ought not to be called a permanent garrison. The idea that they could go on with the policy of holding South Africa by force as a permanent policy was not entertained by either side of the House. Difficulties were thick in South Africa, and in his opinion they were difficulties which would bring people on both sides to the conclusion that the task of government in that country was one which could only be eventually solved by self-government of the white population. When that solution was effected, whatever forces were retained in South Africa would, of course, be retained as in any other colony, with the consent of the Government of the colony itself. An idea was put forward last year, very largely from the other side of the House, that there might be some economy in retaining this force in South Africa in future with a view to the relief of India. The idea was that, if they stationed one man in South Africa, they might save two men at home. If that idea were correct, it would, of course, mean increased efficiency and economy, and it did not mean the creation of an army of occupation, for the force would be kept there only with the consent of the Government of the Colony itself. But if that idea was gone altogether and the Government had made up their minds that there was no efficiency or economy to be gained in that way, there was no object in their building permanent barracks for the forces in South Africa. He would like to know on some future occasion whether barracks were being built, whether they were to be permanent barracks, and what the distribution of the forces in South Africa was to be.

He was not surprised that the Committee did not take very much interest in the discussion of these Estimates. They were illusory and provisional, and he thought they ought not to have been presented to the House at all. In view of everything that the Secretary of State, himself, and the Prime Minister had said, the Government ought to have asked for a Vote on account, and postponed the Estimates. The whole question of the Army was in a state of solution, at all events as far as the mind of the Government was concerned. The Prime Minister had tried the temper of the Committee very highly in recent years. He had given them quite a different idea to-day of what we wanted the Army for from that which he gave a few years ago. Some Members of the House last year and on previous occasions very strongly opposed the Army reform scheme of the present Secretary of State for India, but the Prime Minister defended that scheme. He resented the attacks upon it, and repelled them with indignation; and now this afternoon he stood up and spoke in favour of the Report of a Committee which blew to atoms the scheme of the Secretary of State for India. He seemed to think that the House should accept that change of attitude on his part as the most natural thing in the world after all the indignation he had shown in defending his right hon. friend's scheme. He thought much better of the Report of the Committee than of anything which had appeared in the way of Army reform yet, but it was a little bitter that they should have had to fight so hard before the Government reached this state of things. After fighting for an expensive, wasteful, and impossible scheme, the Government had at last blundered on to something which seemed to have, at any rate, possibilities of retrenchment and efficiency. He would express no opinion upon the details of the Report, but it had done this service—it had entirely disposed of the wasteful and expensive scheme of the Secretary of State for India. It had, at any rate, cleared the ground. It had, indeed, left the Estimates. They were still there because the Government could not make up their minds as to how far they would adopt the Report in particulars; and that was why he thought it would have been fairer to the Committee if the Government had admitted that the Estimates they presented or the Votes they asked for were to be as provisional as the state of their opinion in regard to the Report. But he did not wish to discourage the Government in any way from regarding that Report favourably. They were in a very tentative state of mind in regard to it, but it had cleared the ground. The Secretary for War in the winter made a very interesting and courageous speech, in which he said that we had not yet settled what we wanted our Army for, and also that we might by spending the same amount of money that we spent now get a much better Army than at the present time, or by spending even less get an Army quite as effective as the present one. He was one of those who believed that they must have a reform of the system before getting that efficiency, and he recognised that this Committee had approached the subject with great breadth of mind and with great vigour and grasp. While reserving his opinion upon details, he did hope that the Government were not going to be paralysed by difficulties in the Cabinet, and that, whatever passing difficulties there might be in the Cabinet which might prevent them from digesting and adopting what they thought good in the Report of the Committee and disclosing their mind to the House, they would in a short time as completely forget those difficulties as the Prime Minister had apparently forgotten the fact that he defended with such vigour and affection the very scheme of Army reform which had been so completely condemned by the Committee.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said he should like to have a clearer explanation of the statement of the Prime Minister, in which he said that the expenditure on the Army depended on the requirements of the Empire. That was to say that if the Empire were to go on increasing, the Army should be correspondingly increased. Everyone must, however, realise that there was a limit to the purse of the nation, and that there should be some consideration for what the nation could afford to pay. That fact ought not to be left out of consideration altogether, otherwise it would be a case of the old story of the frog and the bull. He hoped the Government in considering any new scheme would remember the strained circumstances of the moment. They could not go on at the rate at which they were at present going, and unless there were some great reduction in the expenditure, the Army in the future would be so reduced as to be useless, which would be a great danger to the country. He trusted that the Government would take care that the spirit of economy was not left altogether out of consideration in this matter.

CAPTAIN JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.) did not think the right hon. Gentleman was justified in the attack he had made on the Prime Minister who, he said, had warmly defended the scheme of the Secretary of State for India when it was before the House and had no less warmly advocated that of the Secretary of State for War now. When it was borne in mind that since the scheme of the Secretary of State for India the War Commission had published its Report and the Defence Committee had been put upon a proper footing the change in the mind of his right hon. friend was easily accounted for. The War Commission stated that theA rmy, which had hitherto been run on peace principles, would now have to be run on war principles, and when his right hon. friend came to realise the enormous difference in the principles before laid down and those laid down by the War Commission, the reason would be easily understood for his change of opinion. He thought the Secretary of State for India had been somewhat hardly used in this matter because, although his scheme had been condemned, it must be admitted he was the first Secretary of State for War who tried to do something in the direction of decentralisation. His scheme was by no means perfect, there were many mistakes in it, but it did involve decentralisation. The House was twitted with having taken too much time in getting Mr. Speaker out of the Chair in the discussion of small details, but the time had now come when the House had resolved itself into a Committee for discussing these details in the interest of the Army itself. The first question he would ask was whether there would be in the future any development of the policy of trying to get soldiers from the Colonies to serve in the British Army? Would recruiting officers be established in South Africa, Australia, Canada, and elsewhere, and attempts made to get our fellow subjects to become part and parcel of the Imperial Army. It was a matter of great regret to him that something was not done to attract the Colonials to the Army. The Maltese might also be induced by liberal terms to garrison different places in India and the Mediterreanean, and so far as Australia was concerned, it had always seemed to him that it would be a very good thing if it were possible to get an Australian regiment to India, as it would show the natives of that dependency that there were other British forces available besides those coming from the United Kingdom. It was only a question of pay after all, and that matter could no doubt be got over by arrangement, especially when it was remembered that British soldiers in India drew double the pay they received at home.

He should also be glad to know what was to be the future policy with regard to the building of barracks. When at Shorncliffe recently, he noticed that since he was stationed there a large amount of land had been purchased by Government for manœuvring purposes and that barracks were now being built upon it, the result of which was that a large portion of the land was lost for the purposes of manœuvres. This seemed to him to be a great mistake, and the same thing, he understood, was taking place on Salisbury Plain. He also desired to draw attention to the non-observance of the pledge given by the present Chief Secretary for Ireland with regard to the cavalry regiments, that men joining cavalry regiments should have the privilege of serving permanently in the regiment they joined. In no force was the *esprit de corps* so great as in the cavalry regiments, and a distinct pledge was given that 200 men in such regiment should form a permanent portion of it. He did not believe that any of the men enlisting in cavalry regiments were informed of this privilege that they could enlist permanently in a particular regiment, and he thought some steps should be taken to carry out the spirit of the pledge that had been given. He would also like to know whether any decision had been arrived at on the vexed question of armaments, and particularly with regard to the abolition of the lance as a weapon of war. One high cavalry authority was greatly in favour of its retention, but, on the other hand, they were told by a high officer who had served principally in Highland regiments that the lance was an absolutely useless weapon, that at present it was neither one thing nor the other. The orders were that it was to be used for ceremonial purposes, but the men were to have no real instruction in its use. It was a great pity a proper decision could not be arrived at. If the lance was to be retained only as a pretty toy the sooner it was done away with the better. If, on the other hand, the advice of cavalry officers was taken, the lance should be placed in its proper positon. A question of considerable importance to those affected by it was that of the proper supply of regulation books for the use of officers. It was exceedingly difficult for any officer to obtain the proper books. From time to time they were out of print, and men going up for examination were obliged in many cases to pay exorbitant sums for books which they could not otherwise obtain. He hoped that steps would be taken to keep the supply of the regulations and of the necessary books up to date. While fully appreciating the difficulties of the position in which the Secretary of State had been placed, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would persevere in the course he had marked out, and that he would do his best to secure the adoption of the Reconstruction Committee's Report almost in its entirety. There were some parts of the Report with which he did not agree, but he hoped that its vital principles would be put into practice, and that the reception the public generally had accorded to the Report would be an encouragement to the right hon. Gentleman to persevere in the path upon which he had started.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said that, before moving the reduction of the Vote by 10,000 men, he desired to refer to a matter which had already figured in the discussion. The position had doubtless been changed by the speech of the Prime Minister, who had declared that the Government did not bind themselves to approve of Part II. of the Report in whole or in part, and that he did not agree with many of the criticisms in that section of the Report. That was a reassuring statement, because there were many far-reaching proposals of the Committee which ought not to be adopted without very careful consideration of their probable effect upon the finances of the country. In a single sentence Lord Esher and his colleagues proposed to abolish the Accountant-General's Department. In the judgment of financial authorities, the accounting at headquarters, so far as the saving of money and the promotion of efficiency were concerned, was better in the Army than in the Navy, and it had been the aim of the Admiralty to work up to the level of the War Office. Another important announcement was that at a later period of the session a further statement would be made on Army policy. One could not fail to recognise that in view of the rapidity with which the Report had been produced and substantial parts adopted, it was impossible at present for a full or well considered decision upon many important matters to be announced. The second Army statement would therefore be anticipated with great interest. In moving the reduction of the Vote by 10,000 men, he was acting largely on economical grounds. He was one of those who, when it was less popular so to do than now, had advocated economy in Army and Navy expenditure, and he remembered a Treasury official saying five or six years ago that economy had a future but no present. He hoped they were now in sight of that "future," and that steps would be taken in the direction of economy. It was certainly necessary that all who desired economy should take every opportunity of urging their views upon the House. He did not agree with the Prime Minister that the first object of our military organisation should be to have a large highly-trained military force available for purposes of aggression or military expeditions abroad. Our Army ought to be primarily for purposes of home defence. He was entirely in sympathy with the view that the proposed permanent garrison in South Africa was far too large. No less than 72,000 men were serving in the Colonies and Egypt, or almost as many British soldiers as in the normal garrison in India, and representing a rise of about 20 per cent. during the last six or seven years. That rise had taken place, not merely in Africa, but in other colonial and foreign stations. With regard to South Africa, this was the third estimate in the course of the year as to the number of men the authorities responsible considered necessary. In last March the permanent garrison was put at 15,000; in July the estimate was increased to 30,000; it was now said that 21,000 would be necessary. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that this figure was in accordance with the report of Lord Milner and the authorities at the Cape. That was doubtless the ground on which the figure was put into the Estimates, but it did not justify the statement in the Secretary of State's memorandum that it was to be looked upon as a permanent garrison, to be maintained presumably out of Imperial funds. In addition to this heavy charge, £2,000,000 had already been spent, and we were committed to an expenditure of a further £1,000,000 in the erection of permanent barracks in South Africa. Where were those barracks to be—in Cape Colony, or in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony? And where were the troops to be stationed?

He advocated this reduction upon another ground. On page 4 of the Estimates there was a table explaining Vote A. as regarded the number proposed. The last column stated that 10,000 men were required for Somaliland. He took it that those men were included in the total of 227,000 men. Therefore they were being asked for a total of 10,000 men for Somaliland, and yet not a single penny was being asked in these Estimates for the payment of those troops. That made these Estimates not only provisional and interim, but also inaccurate. Here they were being asked to vote a certain number of men and the Government were not asking for the money to pay them. The Secretary of State for War admitted in his memorandum that he did not ask for the money for these men, for he stated that he had deliberately omitted any Estimate for Somaliland. He did not consider that was any explanation at all, and it was no reason for breaking, if not the law, at least the practice of Parliament in the past. The hon. Member for Islington asked if the Government had any money for next year for this campaign, and the right hon. Gentleman replied "No." After the 31st of March there would be no money available for the payment of those troops. What chance was there of the war really coming to an end before the 31st of March next? As far as he could see, the omens were the other way. A

telegram, dated 4th March, stated that the Mullah had been informed that only his death or capture would put an end to the operations. That did not look like reconciliation and it did not appear as if the British authorities were making any serious attempt to induce the Mullah and his forces to surrender. Another telegram, dated the 6th of March, stated that—

> "The season's operations were expected to be over by the middle or end of April; that the transport was practically worn out and the hard work done by the Indian troops was beginning to tell upon them."

Therefore the most favourable opinion was that the campaign would not end until the end of April and up to that time no money was being asked for. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that he might move for an additional Estimate in the future, but it was clear that if the renewal of the campaign was necessary in the ensuing season it would be a very costly one, because the transport was now worn out. He had not followed the details of this campaign, but he welcomed one of the statements of the Secretary of State for War in which he said that if an opportunity could be given, consistent with the safety of those dependent upon this country, to bring about peace he would avail himself of that opportunity. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman what was his justification for the extremely unusual course he had pursued in regard to these Estimates? The cardinal principle laid down by Sir Erskine May was that the Estimates should contain the total expenditure for the year and the Votes for all the services for which money was wanted. They were not asking the Government to put down an enormous sum for Somaliland, because they knew it was an uncertain charge, but he did not think it was treating the country fairly to present Estimates which contained no provision for the expeditionary force in Somaliland, and did not put in any sum of money to meet the expenses of that force. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to investigate the matter, and, meanwhile, he begged to move a reduction of the Vote by 10,000 men.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 217,000, be maintained for the said Service."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said the Secretary of State for War had complained that afternoon of the Opposition raising a great number of subjects which he thought ought to be discussed on the specific Votes. If the right hon. Gentleman would carry his memory back to the time when he was a private Member he would remember that a great many Votes involving large quantities of ammunition and stores were hurried through without any discussion at all. The only time they were free to discuss every subject was upon the Motion that Mr. Speaker should leave the Chair. That was his legitimate excuse for the Opposition raising small points which he agreed would be more appropriately discussed on the specific Votes. He had ventured to point out to the right hon. Gentleman certain details in regard to the men upon which he thought it was possible for him to make certain reductions. His hon. friend had now proposed to reduce the forces by 10,000 men. The Prime Minister had made two specific statements which were of the greatest possible importance. In one of them he told the Committee that he supported the Secretary of State for India's scheme last year because he had not got the full information which he now possessed, and then he went on to say that the possible invasion of this country by a foreign force was, according to the information now at his disposal, not to be considered as a serious or probable contingency. If that information was correct, then the Committee ought to have fuller information in support of so serious a statement, for it was one which must affect the number of troops to be kept in this country. If no foreign invasion of this country was possible or probable they could afford to dispense with a large number of the Regular troops which, up to the present, it had been their custom to maintain in this country. If the Army had simply to supply drafts for India and the Colonies and sufficient men for an expeditionary force, that would enable the Government to reduce the total to a number very much nearer 40,000 or 50,000 men. For that general reason he should support the reduction. About twelve months ago the Secretary of State for India told them that this war in Somaliland would last some four or five months, and that it would cost about £500,000 or £600,000, but they knew now that both the duration of the war and its cost had been sadly under-rated. There had been an entire misconception of the resisting powers of the enemy, of the number of troops required to bring the campaign to an end, and the difficulties of the country in which they were operating. The total of £1,900,000, returned as the cost of the expedition, was misleading. What was the position of affairs in Somaliland when the campaign began? The Mullah was in the Italian territory. At a cost of many officers and men they had driven him into territory where he was safely ensconced, and where it would be impossible to follow him as soon as the rains broke. After 500 or 600 men had been killed, troops had been brought practically from all parts of the world. They were now employing 8,000 men, at a cost of £120,000 a month. The Government, which had made no provision for the future, were not very sure what they had been doing in the past. The non-success of their operations had within the last week induced a new man to come forward and to set up on his own account. Were the Government going to organise a fresh expedition against him, and was that to be as costly as the present? The Italians had begun to do something, and they were organising a force to check the onward progress of these two Mullahs combined. The Secretary of State for War took a very optimistic view of what was going to happen. He said—

> "In my opinion the situation in Somaliland is more favourable than it has been for many months past."

What was the position? Troops, transports, and money were exhausted, and the right hon. Gentleman called that a more favourable situation. The House had been too long accustomed to favourable anticipation of this campaign, but they had never before had experience of a campaign in progress for which no money was asked. The Secretary of State for War knew that the cost of this campaign was so great that it must have raised difficulties in connection with the coming Budget, and it was in anticipation of financial disaster that no doubt this Vote was postponed at the request of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. If the Secretary of State were to put down the cost of the expedition he would probably state it at £500,000 or £600,000.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said the reason why an Estimate had not been put down for the expedition was that they were absolutely unable to form any anticipation of the course of events at present. It was a great mistake to suppose that it was the practice to estimate the cost of a campaign at all, and so far from the course adopted being contrary to precedent there was only one occasion on which a war had been carried on by means of Estimates at all.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: This is a war in operation.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said the Estimate put down last year was perfectly speculative. No one could foresee the course of any war, and for the purpose of the House of Commons they might as well put down £100,000 or £1,000,000. The Government believed that in a short time it would be possible to make an approximate estimate of what the cost of the war would be. He would remind hon. Members that it was not a question of keeping up all those men after the war ceased. As soon as the war came to a close, the greater number of them would become chargeable on the Indian Exchequer. He was told that he had been too optimistic. On Monday he stated what was perfectly true, that he regarded the situation as more satisfactory than it had been for a long time past. The period when we could conduct this campaign in the same way as we were now conducting it was practically drawing to a close, and we would see in a short time whether the operations were likely to be successful or not. The Government would then be able to review the whole chances of the campaign and the expenditure. He admitted that the House of Commons was entitled to information, and if he had thought it was in the power of anyone at the War Office to form an adequate estimate in regard to the campaign for the coming year, he should have supplied the figure, though it would no doubt have exposed him to as much criticism as the omission of which the hon. Member complained. He felt that he had done no injustice to the House of Commons, and therefore he did not accept any censure.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said it would be more convenient to discuss the reduction on all grounds, and not on a single item.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

And it being half-past Seven of the clock, Mr. Speaker left the Chair till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

FISCAL POLICY.

Mr. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.) said there was no uncertainty as to the duty which called upon him and which would call on any Member sitting on that side of the House placed in similar circumstances to himself, to move this Motion, nor was there any uncertainty of the supreme importance of the Motion which he now brought before the House. His object in moving it was twofold; in the first place he wished to tranquillise the public mind, disorganised and disturbed as it had been by an agitation which had now been going on for many months, and in the second place he desired to extract from the Chancellor of the Exchequer a personal explanation with regard to his action during the winter and the position he had taken up in respect of this agitation. He regarded it as a happy omen that a meeting of the representatives of the largest commercial centre of the world had that afternoon, not half a mile from the House, passed a resolution in absolute sympathy with the Motion he was now bringing forward. It might be said by Gentlemen on the Government Benches that, inasmuch as the whole question had been debated not many weeks ago on an Amendment to the Address, this debate was useless, but his reply to that was that the debate on the King's Speech was a vote of censure and did not touch the question he now raised, and that the clear discussion which he wished to initiate could not be raised in any other manner than that which he took to-night. The hon. Member then referred to speeches made by various members of the Government at different times, and said the only conclusion which could be drawn from them was that the Government were pledged by these statements not to introduce protection or colonial preference even after an appeal to the country, and secondly, that the Government was absolutely hostile to the policy known as the Birmingham policy. That ought to carry conviction to the mind of the country that the Government policy was a direct result of conferences that had taken place in the Cabinet and that it was the united decision arrived at.

Now, if there was one member more than another of the Cabinet upon whom such a decision should be binding, the House would agree that that member was the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but what had been the conduct of the right hon. Gentlemen during the winter? On 3rd November, at Aberdeen, he made the first speech after his assumption of office, and on the 4th he was present at a large meeting addressed by the late Colonial Secretary. Everyone could sympathise with the feeling of filial duty which led the right hon. Gentleman to go there, but the right hon. Gentleman at that meeting said that he was present to show his appreciation for the courage with which the senior Member for Birmingham had advocated his great policy in all its branches. That meant out and out protection. The time had now come for the right hon. Gentleman to choose between filial and Imperial duty. The right hon. Gentleman in the next month, December, spoke in a similar sense at Halifax, and again in January asked whether it was wise to ignore all questions of interest and trust entirely to sentiment as the only bond of union between ourselves and the Colonies. A clear indication of the advocacy of colonial preference by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to be found in the letter addressed by him to the noble Lord the candidate for South Birmingham. What was the policy of the noble Lord? He favoured colonial preference with its consequent taxation of food, and was therefore opposed to the avowed policy of the Government or opposed to what was this morning the avowed policy of the Government. If the policy of the noble Lord the Member for South Birmingham were to be carried out it would be directly antagonistic to the Amendment which had appeared upon the Paper that morning. What was the country and the House to think of the conduct of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? He (Mr. Pirie) would not be wrong if he laid down as the standard of political morality the standard followed by those free-traders who left the Government because they were not protectionists. Ministers were divided as individuals, and even the Departments of the Ministers were divided among themselves upon this question. The President of the Board of Trade was a retaliator, his subordinate the Secretary to the Board of Trade was an out-and-out protectionist. That hon. Gentleman at Glasgow, on 15th December, said—

> "In view of the attitude of a section of the Unionist Party, a very insignificant section he believed"—

The hon. Member must have been alluding to Members, he was certainly not alluding to intellect—

> "it was the clear duty of everyone who differed from their views to say so unmistakably. He did so. He sympathised with Mr. Chamberlain's proposal; not only so, but he really believed that a trade preference would be the direct result of any change of our fiscal policy—"

a trade preference which had been alluded to by the Chancellor of the Exchequer; a policy which had been denounced by every member of the Cabinet and which was tabooed by the Amendment which had appeared on the Paper that morning but had not been allowed to remain. He did not go too far when he said the situation was an intolerable one, degrading to the dignity of the country—free-traders at 3.30 in the afternoon and protectionists at night. Had the Gentlemen sitting on the Treasury Benches no opinions of their own? The President of the Local Government Board, speaking at Bristol in January, after stating his acceptance of the policy of the Prime Minister, said he should always believe that the policy which Mr. Chamberlain had been advancing with such marvellous ability and such wonderful success would have to be adopted by the people of this country, if they were going to save the position, for themselves, and that he would stand at the next election distinctly on the platform of fiscal reform. Very different words were now used in this House, and the Shakespearean quotation was very apt—Now the lion "roars you as gently as any sucking dove." This struck at the very root of our Parliamentary institution. The Government at the present moment were led by manœuvres and tactics instead of by principles, and the interests of the country were made subservient to the individual interests of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Treasury Bench. He had listened with great attention and at times with great advantage to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister ever since he (Mr. Pirie) had been a Member of the House, and up to very lately he had listened to the right hon. Gentleman with a great deal of admiration because of the references he always made to the great traditions of the country and this House, and the one ray of sunshine that illuminated the lamentable episode of the last few months was that hon. Members could go back to the glorious traditions of this House and not find a parallel to what had taken place during this unhappy period.

His Motion condemned protection. The free-traders believed that on free trade depended the purity of public life, and the purity of public life was one of the greatest assets which this great country possessed. Its greatness had been due to free trade, and those who believed in free trade aspired to expand its principles and widen its scope, because they believed that the more its scope were widened the greater would be the blessings for the commerce of this country, which had done more for the peace of this world and for the welfare of mankind, perhaps, than even the efforts of the individual Gentlemen now seated on the Treasury Bench. The free-traders would fight for the purity and the maintenance of the credit of this country with the same fervour as in the past mankind fought for religion. It was in those circumstances he begged to move the Motion standing in his name.

*MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth) seconded the Motion. He would not, he said, disguise from the House that he would have preferred that the reference to His Majesty's Ministers in the Motion had been omitted. He felt that it would have been better if the House could have had before it the simple broad issue between a preferential and protective policy on the one hand and the principle of free trade on the other. Though he made that reservation, he felt bound to state that the words alluding to the language of certain Ministers were true in fact, and were not put in merely as a tag upon which to hang the Motion. It was the utterance of certain Ministers which had caused much of the confusion and trouble which had fallen upon the public mind. He was struck by the observation of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, in the debate on the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose to the Address, that to his surprise all the criticism was levelled at the policy of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, and that so little criticism was directed at the policy of the Government, whatever it might be, a point upon which even now he (Mr. Taylor) would hesitate to dogmatise. He had heard that expression of opinion with surprise, because he should have thought it obvious, not only to the Chief Secretary, but to every Minister, that the attention both of the House of Commons and of the country was riveted, not upon the policy of the Gentlemen who sat upon the Treasury Bench, but upon the more hustling, full-blooded, and intelligible policy which had emanated from Birmingham. What was exciting the interest of the country was neither the policy of the Government nor the changes in that policy, but the attitude which the Government was prepared to assume towards the much more virile policy which had emanated from the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. In the memorable speech delivered by the President of the Board of Trade, he alluded to the right hon. Member for West Birmingham's policy in very significant language. He said—

> "Mr. Chamberlain has given a somewhat detailed account of his proposals, and a detailed account of a proposal to an eager Opposition is like a pot of honey to flies in summer. You have only to look at the treatment which Mr. Chamberlain's scheme has received in order to judge of the wisdom of the premature disclosure of details."

What he complained of was that the Government in their official capacity had studied too much what was known as the doctrine of economy. They had officially not disclosed enough of their policy to satisfy them, while in their private capacity they had disclosed a great deal too much. The difference between the official voice and the pious opinion was strongly marked in the utterances from the Ministerial Bench, and, curiously enough, the pious opinion of the Minister was often more audible and aggressive than the official voice with which he spoke. That was infinitely more true of the speeches delivered with greater freedom outside that Chamber. In particular he would refer to what fell from the Chancellor of the Exchequer at Halifax on the 11th December as to the possibility of better relations with the Colonies, when the right hon. Gentleman said it was in the yet further development of the Government's commercial policy that would be found the best means to that end, and he asked those whom he was then addressing to co-operate in that development. The free-traders on that side of the House had a right to ask from the Government an explicit statement officially as to whether they were, or were not, opposed to the protective and preferential programme enunciated from Birmingham. When they asked for finality from the Government, they were confronted with a formula. "Liberty to negotiate" and "fiscal reform" were useful phrases, which might carry a meaning of one kind or another, according as the future exigencies of the situation might develop. Until some clearer indication had been given to the House and to the country of what those formulae meant, he, at any rate, reserved his adhesion to them. In the present temper of public opinion, what was really required was an explicit statement, and not a formula, as to whether the Government were, or were not, officially opposed to the programme which had emanated from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. It could not be said for a moment that the attitude adopted by the Government had been either for the comfort of the Unionist free-traders, or for the benefit, as a whole, of the Party of which the Prime Minister was the head. He appreciated fully the difficulties which his right hon. friend had to face, and would be the last to deny what he believed to be the lofty motives by which he had been actuated in taking the course he had. But, none the less, it had been disastrous to the Party, and, certainly to the cause which free traders had at heart, it had been of the most disappointing character. It was the custom in China—though he would speak with diffidence with the Colonial Secretary present—if a Chinaman had a grievance against an opponent, not to cut the throat of his opponent, but to cut his own upon his opponent's doorstep. He hoped, as a Party, they would not adopt Chinese ideas in Party warfare.

The Motion before the House referred to preferential and protective proposals, and condemned them in emphatic language. He associated himself fully with that, and was prepared, with other Members sitting on those Benches, to offer those proposals the most solid and lasting opposition which it was in his power, politically, to do. The British Empire was a maritime Empire, although, during the recent debates on the fiscal question, that was a point of view apparently sometimes ignored. It was impossible to exaggerate the peculiar economic conditions of this country, which differentiated it altogether from countries like Germany, the United States, or Russia. Our great lines of communication with those colonies, of which we were so proud, were by sea, and only by control of the seas could we hope to hold that Empire together. Any proposals which, by their protective character, would add either to the cost of building, storing, or repairing our ships, must prove in the long run detrimental to the best interests of an Empire which depended upon shipping for its actual cohesion. It was a significant fact that the cost of victualling a ship in America was at least 10 per cent. above the cost in English ports. Was it not a significant fact that, in a small island densely populated, producing little of sustenance for itself, we should find this state of things as compared with a continent like America, furnished with boundless resources, and able, so far as stores were concerned, to undertake to compete with all the world? And if that were true of stores, was it not true in other directions? They were congratulating themselves in that House the other day on the purchase of two battleships intended for the Republic of Chili. How was it that we were able to build battleships for all the world, and how was it that we were able to keep the cost of construction in this country infinitely less than in protected countries? It was because of our free-trade system. What had enabled us to get together all the materials for that construction far more cheaply than even the other countries that produced them? He had listened with intellectual pleasure to the speech which the Secretary to the Board of Trade had delivered on this question, and when that hon. Gentleman was speaking of the steel trade he had felt inclined to put this question to him—How was it that in America, where the steel industry was stimulated by every artificial aid of tariff and trust, they had to pay for ship plates £8 a ton, as against £5 10s. in this country? How was it that, as a result, the shipbuilding industry of America had utterly failed either to keep pace with that of other countries, or still less to compete with the enormous building facilities of this country? Germany was often held out as a model of shipbuilding, and yet it was a fact that we added to our mercantile marine, between 1880 and 1900, 2,700,000 tons of shipping, more than the whole German fleet as it existed to-day, and this after allowing for all the advantages that Germany had had, and allowing for the materials for shipbuilding being free and not subject to duty. These considerations, which affected our world-wide interests as no considerations affecting only our internal industries possibly could, had not received in the course of recent discussions the amount of attention to which they were entitled, and until a far stronger case had been made out of injury to our internal trade, it would be a suicidal act to adopt a policy which would increase the cost of stores, or building ships, to the jeopardy of our trade and our Empire.

The right hon. Member for West Birmingham, in the fiscal campaign to which he had brought matchless eloquence and tireless energy, had appealed to much that was high and enduring in English character, and to certain other elements in that character which, though equally enduring, were not quite so lofty. He had made an appeal on the grounds of commercial advantage, Imperial unity, and economic revenge. From whom had the right hon. Gentleman got a response? Who were the "active citizens" who were furnishing the fighting powers for the campaign? He thought it one of the most serious features of the situation that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had called into being forces which he himself could not control, forces which, legitimately enough, when the opportunity was offered for prosecuting and benefiting their own trades, had naturally enough set themselves in motion to obtain all the benefits that might be possible from what the right hon. Gentleman called "a scientific tariff." He felt that in this matter what had to be faced was a conflict of ideals. The ex-Colonial Secretary, if he was not mistaken, bade his countrymen turn their backs upon the England they had known—that England whose principles of commercial freedom, though they might not have conquered or converted the world, had permeated large portions of it with a salutary and a beneficent influence. He was confident that by adhering to the principles of commercial freedom, as opposed to those of monopoly and privilege, there was no risk of sacrificing the unity of the British Empire or of jeopardising, what was still more important, the ultimate cohesion of the Anglo-Saxon race. For these reasons he with a clear conscience seconded the Motion, and he hoped the House would endorse it as an emphatic condemnation of the policy of preference and protection.

Motion made, and Question put, "That this House, noting the continued agitation in favour of preferential and protective tariffs, which is encouraged by the language used by certain of His Majesty's Ministers, deems it necessary to express its condemnation of any such policy."—(*Mr. Pirie.*)

MR. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford) said that the Motion seemed to condemn the policy of preferential and so-called protective tariffs, and he hoped it would not be adopted by the House. He was strongly in favour of preferential tariffs, and he believed that the term "protective tariffs" was not used in its right sense either by the mover or seconder of the Resolution. Now, as regarded preferential tariffs, he did not think that the main question was an economic one at all. There was no greater question at the present time in our politics than the future union of this great Empire as between its various parts—the Colonies on the one side and the mother country on the other. The large amount of support which was undoubtedly given to the right hon. Member for West Birmingham was due to his having, on this colonial question, rightly interpreted the feeling of this country and of the Empire. They ought not to go off on any side issue. The true question was whether it was desirable to take further steps to promote the permanent solidarity of our great Colonial Empire, and upon this point—he saw the First Lord of the Treasury present, and he had heard his Sheffield speech—there was no difference whatever, so far as he could understand, and as regarded a main principle, between the Prime Minister and the right hon. gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. [AN HON. MEMBER on the OPPOSITION Benches: That is what we say.] What he meant when he made that statement was that both these right hon. Gentlemen had said that if there was to be a permanent solidarity of our great Colonial Empire it ought to be based on some form of commercial union. The difference was this, and he thought they could well appreciate it, at any rate on that side of the House, that although there was no difference in principle on that point, it was well open to difference of opinion as to whether it could be best pressed forward under one condition or another. He begged humbly to agree with the standpoint that in a great policy of this kind, which went to the root of the Imperial position in the future, that we ought to have what the Prime Minister called the heart and conscience of the people with us. He believed that as the people of this country realised that it was no petty question of an economic character that was involved, but this great question of our whole Imperial position in the future, they would in their heart and conscience agree with the Prime Minister and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and that we would carry through what, to his mind, was more important than any other political question at the present day, the foundation of our great Colonial Empire permanently on a solid and constructed basis. He did not look at this question of preferential tariffs himself on any other basis. He did not discuss whether the sum to be sacrificed by the people of this country in that behalf was great or small; but if the people believed that we ought to have commercial union with the Colonies the first step towards that union must be in the nature of preferential tariffs, and that the people would not be slow to make the sacrifices demanded of them for that purpose. He went beyond that point. Any measure of commercial union could not, of course, be fully developed in the first instance. He looked on any question of preference as the first step only to a higher ideal, which was that, in the future, we might have a great free trade Empire; that we might have not only free trade between the mother country and the various colonies, but free trade between all the component parts of the Empire. A great free trade Empire of that sort would be in an economic position to hold its own either against the United States or Germany, or any combination of protective nations. He wanted to know whether, at the outset, all possibility of any advance in a great policy of that kind was to be stopped because of a mere side issue—that the people of this country, however great the prospective advantages might be, were so selfish that they would make no sacrifice for it. He did not believe that of the people of this country, and he did not believe that of the great Lancashire constituency which he had the honour to represent. When they realised that fact these small side issues would be disregarded and the policy of the Unionist Party would be to hand down this great Empire upon a permanent, constructive, and solid basis.

It was customary in debates upon this question to speak as though there was a contest going on between free trade and protection, but he joined issue with that contention, for they had not got free trade. They could not have free trade without free exchange, and that meant freedom in the two countries and not free imports in one country only. With regard to the real economic question, it was an extremely difficult subject, which could not be approached by merely general assertions. It could only be faced by a great industrial community, and it was no use having an insurance after your house had been burned down. When they had a free import country surrounded by countries with high tariffs, they had a new economic condition which was never dealt with by Cobden or any other free-trader, and what they had to do now was to see in reference to that new economic condition what was the true economic remedy. Did anyone deny that a free import country was placed at a disadvantage by having her natural markets taken away from her by the imposition of high tariffs? He would put this question to so-called free-traders opposite. Would any hon. Gentleman opposite say that conditions of that kind were in accord with what Mr. Cobden or any other economist would call free trade? If they had a high-tariff country with its own home market, and if they allowed that country free access into our neutral market, then they gave them an unfair advantage which could never exist under free trade. If they could not bring about free exchange then they intended to insist that the conditions should be those of fair exchange. What was meant by fair exchange? No doubt they would have to have artificial provisions, but only in order to equalise the disadvantages which a free import country was under if it had to compete with a high prohibitive tariff. Beyond that he did not think anybody wanted to go. He did not call that a protective tariff, but simply a defensive tariff, in order that our manufacturers should have the same advantages as our foreign competitors.

He noticed that questions had been put to the Government asking whether these defensive measures were likely to be permanent or temporary. How could the Government answer questions of that kind, because, whether they would be temporary or not did not depend upon this country, but on the Governments of foreign countries, who were putting on these high tariffs. If retaliation was effective and brought about either free exchange or fair exchange it would have accomplished its purpose. If, on the other hand, foreign countries would not change their high tariffs, it was not for the people in this country to criticise the economic conditions of foreign countries. If foreign countries maintained those high tariffs which they thought were to their advantage, on the other hand, the defensive measures of this country must be maintained until the fair conditions of trade for which this country were asking were conceded. Could anything be more insane, in seeking free or fair exchange, than to say that we would withdraw these defensive tariffs although this country did not get the benefits for which they were put on? A policy of that kind would be suicidal as regarded a great constructive commercial policy. He had no sympathy with that reactionary Party who refused to realise these new conditions, who spoke as though free trade existed when they knew it did not exist, and who suggested that they were taking some new aggressive step in our commercial policy, whereas they were doing nothing more then adopting a defensive attitude to protect our commercial interests against attacks made upon them purposely and intentionally by certain foreign countries in the shape of high protective tariffs. As long as he took any part in political life he would never assent to an injury of that kind being done to our great commercial interests without demanding of any Government that might be in power that they should find some effective remedy.

The support given to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was not, in his opinion, as regarded the details of any scheme he had brought forward, because this question was much too serious to decide upon any one suggestion. They wanted the whole matter threshed out. The commercial community of this country realised fully that they were suffering at the present time under a serious disadvantage and it was that disadvantage they were seeking to remedy. Something had been said about Imperial and economic topics. But was it really suggested by any responsible person in this House that if measures of this kind were necessary to protect the trade of this country the morality of this country was so low that it could not adopt them without poisoning the purity of commercial and political life? That was an indictment against the morality of the whole nation. He did not believe, if they wanted to apply effective remedies, that they would have to sweep them on one side because their morality was too low, but what he pleaded for was that as regarded preferential tariffs the leading idea was not economic but Imperial, and he held that there would be a closer relationship with the Colonies under the policy initiated by that great Colonial Minister (Mr. Chamberlain). As regarded the economic position, he hoped they would not be frightened by those bogeys of free trade and protection. Let them see what the real evil was and recognise the true economic difficulty, and ask the Government to provide a remedy by declaring that if they could not have free trade at least they must have fair trade.

MR. M'KENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) said the speech just delivered curiously illustrated the Prime Minister's declaration at Sheffield that he meant to lead, and it contradicted every principle laid down by members of the Government. The hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down said that if he considered colonial preference was desirable he should support it, and he said that amid the cheers of the great body of hon. Members opposite. But in the debate on the Address the Home Secretary said that preference was not a part of the Government policy at all. The hon. and learned Member advocated protection, but called it fair trade. He might point out that they had known it for years under that name, but whatever name he gave it meant putting taxes upon goods which came into this country. They called that protection, but the hon. and learned Member called it fair trade, and yet the Home Secretary on behalf of the Government denounced protection, and now the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, amid the cheers of his own side, had declared himself in favour of fair trade. Did the Prime Minister really mean to lead? Was he going to adopt in this House the same policy as was adopted in the Cabinet? Had he got two Amendments, and if one did not serve had he got another in his pocket? [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"] He was speaking within the knowledge of the House [MINISTERIAL interruptions] —the House knew that there was an Amendment on the Paper on behalf of the Government dealing with protection and preference. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet described that as "a put-up job," and instantly the job was put down. But that was not all. Another Amendment was circulated contradictory of the first Amendment, but as both the first and the second Amendments had been withdrawn he expected that before long insular notes would shortly be considered as no longer being before the public. He preferred a clear, downright statement such as had been made by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite. They understood what was meant by free trade or free imports, because they had had it for sixty years, and they understood protection, because it would be the protection which they had sixty years ago. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"] Did anyone understand the policy which was going to offer nothing to a great commercial nation but a series of wars of retaliation? That policy had been brought forward for the purpose of keeping the Party together. If that object had been attained by the Prime Minister there would have been something to be said for his policy, but both inside this House and in the country they had seen that far from bringing the Party together, on the contrary it had been disastrous to the Conservative and Unionist Party. Surely the Party opposite ought to declare definitely whether they were in favour of free trade or preference and protection. The Home Secretary in the debate on the Address said it had been recognised that men holding different views on this question might be in the same Cabinet

It was true that men holding different views on any question might be in the same Cabinet, but they should not be defending different views. When they had an issue of this sort upon which every by-election had been fought, it was not only unseemly but contrary to every tradition that the Government should speak with two voices. What were they to say of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had been going up and down the country putting forward protection and preference, and declaring his sympathy with the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in all its branches? If the plea for latitude of opinion was a good one, why did the late Colonial Secretary resign? Surely the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was just as much bound as the late Colonial Secretary, if he wished to advocate a policy of preference, and he was just as much bound as the late Colonial Secretary to give up his office in the Government. But this was not the pious opinion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for he had gone about the country advocating this policy with all the zeal of a new convert. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had taken every opportunity in his official capacity to push forward his views on this subject, and a striking instance occurred only last week. A well-known association wrote asking the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make certain changes in the regulations dealing with tea, and immediately the right hon. Gentleman seized the opportunity to promote his fiscal propaganda, and he replied that he could not under the present fiscal system give a preferential duty in favour of Indian tea. The association wrote back stating that they never asked about the fiscal system, and did not want preferential duties, and all they wanted was that the Government should set up a standard for teas coming into this country such as had been adopted in other countries. Therefore the right hon. Gentleman used his official position to promote his own views.

But there was a far more serious danger if the right hon. Gentleman remained a member of the Government and was allowed to advocate those views unrestrained by a vote of this House. As they all knew the sole control over the spending departments of this country was in the Treasury, and so long as the Government of the country was dependent upon a majority of this House they were quite sure that when they introduced Estimates they would be carried. But behind the Government stood the Treasury, and every Estimate of every other Department had to be passed and approved by the Treasury before it came to this House. Suppose they had as Chancellor of the Exchequer a right hon. Gentleman who had no interest in economy. Let them suppose that that Chancellor of the Exchequer had discovered a means by which taxes were no longer a burden, but were to be made an instrument for promoting national prosperity. Suppose a few extra taxes were imposed, and a depression in trade was caused that would be given as one more illustration of the decline of British trade. Holding such views the right hon. Gentleman could not have the same interest in economy as his predecessor in that office, who knew that if he allowed any expenditure to be incurred he would have to introduce taxes which would fall upon the people of this country. He looked upon the freedom of the Treasury from any taint of protection as necessary to the real interests of this country. When they remembered what the Chancellor of the Exchequer believed; when they remembered that the right hon. Gentleman thought they were at a critical time of their history, and at the parting of the ways; when they bore in mind that the right hon. Gentleman thought the British Empire was in danger of dissolution, and that he had discovered a means of increasing wages, and making employment more constant, hon. Gentlemen opposite must agree that that would be a dominant motive with him, and that in his conduct of the finances of this country he was bound to do everything he could to bring about a policy which he thought was essential. There was only one test possible for the Chancellor of the Exchequer under the circumstances, and that was a vote of the House of Commons. The House was being asked in the interests of the good government of the country, and of our Colonies, to throw over the policy of free trade. Only the other day they had an illustration of the bad effect on the Colonies of the present vacillation between two policies, for the

Governor-General of the Australian Commonwealth made a speech in which he welcomed colonial preference. Now we were deluding the Colonies in regard to that. The Prime Minister did not mean to give them colonial preference. The Home Secretary had declared in that House, on behalf of the Government, that the policy of the Government was not protection, that the policy of preference was not included in the policy of the Government, and that "if an appeal were made to the electors and a majority were returned in favour of the Government's policy, that would not entitle us to go further and carry out a policy of preference." In face of that declaration he was justified in saying that when the Ministers went up and down the country advocating preference they were deluding the Colonies. They were raising hopes which they could not fulfil; if they did fulfil them their only course would be to resign.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devonshire, Honiton) said that after the speech of the hon. Member for Stratford it was impossible for him to remain silent. This Motion condemned the Government, because individual members of it had from time to time, and not very recently, advocated the policy of the Member for West Birmingham. That policy was very attractive at the first start; it appealed to the Imperial instincts of the country; it appealed to their desire to weld their great Empire together, and, as such, many of them thought that it deserved the fullest consideration at the hands of the people. But the difficulty of carrying out that policy had shown very clearly that it was not a policy to be adopted without hesitation and consideration, and he heartily supported the Prime Minister when he said that this policy of preferential tariffs and taxation of food could not be carried without carrying with it the heart and conscience of this country. It certainly had not done that yet. He was satisfied that the Government had adopted the right policy. It could not be denied that some liberty must be allowed to individual Members. They had plenty of evidence of that on the other side in connection with the question of Home Rule. Liberty must be allowed, but he hoped it would not be given to too great an extent. Nothing had happened which justified a Motion condemning the policy of the Government. He hoped that that policy would be reaffirmed and reiterated by the Prime Minister that night, and that the right hon. Gentlemen would show that the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was not the policy of the Government, and that it would not be so even after the next general election.

*MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.): There are few more edifying spectacles than that of a man who, having fallen into temptation, has been rescued before he has taken the fatal step. I confess I never anticipated that the right hon. Member who has just sat down would have afforded us that spectacle. I congratulate him most heartily that he, more wary than others, drew back his foot before it was plunged into the morass. My right hon. friend, I think, is mistaken in his estimate of this Motion as being in its nature a vote of censure on the Government. [Cries of "What is it?"] We shall know presently. What is the object which my hon. friend had in view when he put forward this Motion? As I understand, it was this. It is a very simple—I think a very patriotic—one. It is that, in view of the ambiguities which have hitherto surrounded the declarations and the attitude of His Majesty's Ministers in relation to this question, it is the duty of the House of Commons, unless and until, upon the highest authority, those ambiguities shall be cleared away, to express in the most emphatic terms its resolute hostility to the policy of protection and of preferential taxes on food. It is idle to say that that policy is not before the country. The speech of my hon. and learned friend the Member for Stretford showed clearly that the policy is still alive. It is quite true that the noisy propaganda of the autumn has for a time subsided into silence. [Cries of "No."] Well, we heard very little of it during the debate on the Address. There has been a set-back, a momentary lull. But I venture to submit to the House that it would be the most short-sighted folly to assume that, because the common-sense of the British people has so signally and so significantly repelled this first assault, therefore the attack is not going to be renewed. The movement secured the avowed, and so far as I know the unrecanted, support of a considerable number of hon. Gentlemen who sit opposite. [Some MINISTERIAL cheers.] They are not so vocal as I expected. It had, and I am not sure that it has not still, the sincere, if less articulate, sympathy of a considerable number of others. And what is more important, it has received, as has been abundantly proved to-night by the citations from speeches that have been made during the course of the autumn and the winter, the open patronage of not a few of the Gentlemen who sit on the Treasury Bench. My right hon. friend who has just sat down said, in a deprecatory and apologetic way, that these speeches were not recent ones. Perhaps not; but though not recent, unless the House takes the opportunity of recording its sense of the situation, they may, before we are much older, be renewed. And I think that, if proof were needed of the necessity for this Motion, we could not find a more significant one than the mysterious disappearance of the Amendment which was on the Paper. Why has that Amendment been withdrawn? Let me invite the House to remember its terms. The Amendment would have invited the House to approve—

> "The explicit declarations of His Majesty's Ministers that their policy of fiscal reform does not include either a general system of protection or preference based on the tax tion of food."

Why has that gone? I will tell the House the only theory I can advance for its premature end. It is that it was found that you could not count on a majority of the Party opposite expressing their satisfaction that the policy of the Government is not a protective policy. If that is so, surely no declaration could be more opportune, or of more imperative necessity, than that which the Motion of my hon. friend asks the House to make to-night.

I want to ask the House to look at this matter in view both of the avowed and the unavowed policy of His Majesty's Government. What is the avowed policy? I do not know, and I do not believe that anybody in this House, unless it be the Prime Minister, does know. We are certainly no clearer upon that point than we were at the beginning of the session. It is quite true that we debated it for six nights. We missed the Prime Minister very much. I am sure, however, that the Prime Minister, as the head of a rejuvenated Government, would have been the last to say, as the excessive modesty of some of his colleagues prompted them to say, that the debate should not have taken place in his absence.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): Hear, hear!

MR. ASQUITH: I do not know whether the Prime Minister has heard what went on while he was away. If he had been here I can assure him he would have witnessed from that Bench the most magnificent display of argumentative impartiality which has ever been presented by a united Cabinet to an admiring House. On alternate nights we had proclaimed alternative doctrines. Protectionist succeeded free-trader and free-trader succeeded protectionist. It was a triumph of stage management. And then the whole thing culminated—I am still informing the Prime Minister—in a luminous speech from the Home Secretary, the gist of which was, as far as I understood it, that the Government, while opposed for the present to the taxation of food, would welcome the support of those who were not so opposed, provided always that they were on sufficiently good terms with their local associations. The policy —I am speaking now of the avowed, the official policy—of the Government has been described in different phrases—freedom of negotiation, power of retaliation, sometimes in the still vaguer, more indefinite, but more concise phrase, fiscal reform. There is only one point, I must tell the Prime Minister, on which all his colleagues were agreed: that they could not define any one of these terms in his absence. Let me take the last and the most concise of these phrases, fiscal reform, which I think is a term which has been used not infrequently by the right hon. Gentleman himself. Fiscal reform, in the view of the Prime Minister, I should judge, is not a milk-and-water affair. In his speech at Sheffield he told us that in his view it involved a fundamental reversal of the fiscal canons and traditions which had governed the policy of this country for sixty years. The Prime Minister is a master of language. We all know that terms like those would have been grossly exaggerated and inappropriate to describe a mere power or practice of applying to Parliament *ad hoc* for its sanction for particular measures of reprisals against some country or countries which had outraged fairness in relation to our trade. That a suggestion of that kind exhausted the Prime Minister's idea is sufficiently disposed of by two facts. The first is that such a power already exists, and the second is that only in the very year in which the Prime Minister was speaking, without any appeal to the country or mandate from the electors, the Government had in the Sugar Convention Bill obtained opportunity to exercise that power in its most drastic form. Therefore, if any intelligible meaning is to be attached to the language of the Prime Minister, I have always felt—and I hope that he will tell us to-night whether this is so or not—that it meant that we were to entrust the Executive with the power of putting on a general tariff, to be put on or taken off at its discretion in regard to the countries against whom we were supposed to have a grievance. I wish to put this point to the House. Is that tariff or that power, whichever it is to be, to be used in the case of countries which supply us with food and raw material? Is it only to be used against countries which supply us with manufactured goods? If that is so, I need not point out, what has been abundantly demonstrated before, that it can be of no possible use as an effective instrument of retaliation or protection against the two markets of the world, the United States and Russia, in which the wall of tariffs has been erected most extravagantly high. Therefore, I say, before I pass from this part of the subject, apart from all constitutional objections, either retaliation in the Prime Minister's sense must extend to food and raw materials, or it must be an ineffective weapon in the cases in which it would be most obviously needed.

But I want to come to the policy which the Government does not avow, the policy which is not included in the official programme, the policy to which in moments of pressure, as the other night when the Home Secretary was speaking, they have declared that they are going to offer a provisional resistance. I do not care very much what are the present limitations of the avowed policy. To think that the people of this country are going to vote blindfold in favour of a sketchy and nebulous plan of so-called retaliation without asking themselves what is to be the next step, in what direction they are being led, what is to be the next stage of the journey, is, I think, to entertain a very complete and most unwarranted contempt for their intelligence. It is of importance, therefore, to see in what spirit and with what ulterior purposes this policy of retaliation is put forward. Now I am not going to say anything, because it is not strictly relevant to the Motion, about the unhappy and unexampled controversy that has arisen as to what took place between old colleagues and friends at and immediately after the Cabinet of September. [Cries of "Oh."] I say I am not going to say anything about it. But there is one thing which is unchallenged, and that is that the Prime Minister himself produced both at the Cabinet in August and at the Cabinet in September, in addition to the pamphlet which we have all read—I must be very careful in the use of words—a written thing—which I suppose I may without prejudice call a document.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No.

***MR. ASQUITH**: Well, perhaps it was printed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I presented no document.

***MR. ASQUITH**: It was stated by the noble Lord the Member for Ealing, and it was not denied by the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the noble Lord made the statement, which I do not think he did, I do deny it.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing): I am sorry, but I did not quite catch what my right hon. friend denied that I said.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am sorry. My noble friend and I had no controversy about this. The right hon. Gentleman alleged that at the Cabinet meeting in August, and again in September, I brought forward a printed document. [Opposition cries of "No, a written document."] Well, if anybody knew my objection to writing they would not say a written document. But I brought forward no document in September. [Cries of "In August."] Or in August.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I am very sorry to come into controversy with my right hon. friend, and I can assure him that it is my last wis, and it is most painful to me. [Some Ministerial cries of "Oh."] I say it is most painful to me. What I asserted was that there were two documents under our consideration at the Cabinet at the end of the session, and I understood, and so did other of my right hon. friends, that those documents were both under our consideration at the Cabinet in September.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, that is a mistake.

***Mr. ASQUITH**: But really what difference does it make?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!

***Mr. ASQUITH**: If one was produced in August, there it was. At any rate, it was not withdrawn.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: But it was not there.

***Mr. ASQUITH**: Well, but it was there in August.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes.

***Mr. ASQUITH**: Well, I will not call it a pamphlet, because I believe a pamphlet is a thing which is sold and circulated, nor will I call it—for I have never seen it—a tractate in favour of protection, because the right hon. Gentleman has told us that neither in nor out of the Cabinet has he ever advocated protection.

Mr. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!

***Mr. ASQUITH**: Still I would observe, and would ask the House to observe, that people, even endowed with the rarest dialectical gifts, are sometimes either unable or unwilling to realise the logical consequences of their own reasoning. At any rate, I take of it the description given by the noble Lord, which is that it was a memorandum putting forward proposals which included preferential tariffs and the taxation of food. That is a description which the House will observe has never been denied. What is it that aroused the indignation of the Prime Minister when he spoke in January and here again the other night? Not that description of the document. What aroused his indignation was that Lord Rosebery and others should have said that he had put before the Cabinet two contradictory policies. Very well, what follows? It follows that, in the opinion of the Prime Minister, there is nothing contradictory or inconsistent with the policy of the Government, whatever that policy may be—what it is is accurately known only to Heaven and the Prime Minister himself—but there is nothing inconsistent or contradictory, in the opinion of the Prime Minister, between the policy of the Government and the policy which does include preferential taxation of food. If that is so, who can say that the House of Commons is wasting its time, or performing a task of supererogation when it asks the majority to affirm that they are not in favour of any such policy? But we are not left in this matter—all important particularly after the declarations made by his colleagues in his absence—without some further guidance as to what are the views of the Prime Minister. We have got the published correspondence with the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, supplemented and illuminated by the right hon. Gentleman's speech at Sheffield. Hackneyed as the subject is, the House will pardon me if I read one or two passages. ["Oh."] They will see in a moment it is very much *ad rem*. The Member for West Birmingham, in his letter of 9th September, says this—

> "I suggest you should limit the present policy of the Government to the assertion of our freedom in the case of commercial relations with foreign countries."

Observe "the present policy of the Government." What does the Prime Minister reply ?

> "As to taxation upon food, I am convinced with you that public opinion is not yet ripe for such an arrangement."

Not ripe ! And the right hon. Gentleman adds—I think a most significant addition—

> "The reasons may easily be found in past political battles and present political misrepresentations."

Then he proceeds—and I ask the particular attention of the House to these words, because "fiscal reform," as we all know, is the official name of the Government policy—

> "This branch of fiscal reform is not at present within the limits of practical politics."

I think in substance he repeated the same thing at Sheffield. What does that come to ? Surely it comes to this—that in the opinion of the Prime Minister in a complete scheme of fiscal reform preferential taxation of food would be included. If he opposes it, he opposes it not on grounds of principle, not on grounds of conviction. His opposition to it rests upon, is confined to, and is limited by, the immaturity of public opinion. And to what does the right hon. Gentleman attribute that lamentable unripeness of the opinion of the nation ? To rational or irrational causes ? In the main the causes are, in his view, both irrational and removable. They are due to prejudice, to ignorance, and to misrepresentation. What was his attitude to the Member for West Birmingham when they parted company for what they apparently both hoped was to be a very brief separation ? His attitude was this. If you return empty-handed, as I am afraid you will, I shall be able to say, "I told you so." If, on the other hand, you return bringing your sheaves with you, I shall be able to say, "My heart was always with you; let us now proceed to share the spoils." That is what is called, in these days, giving a lead to one's Party. It may succeed—so far I do not think it has been a brilliant success—in keeping a Party together in this House; but I venture to say that the right hon. Gentleman may label and limit his official programme as much as he pleases, but he cannot label and he cannot limit the issue which will be submitted to the country at the next election. The country when they come to be appealed to will set very little store by the niceties and obscurities of retaliation. They will discriminate—so far as I can foresee, that will be the sole ground on which, in this matter, they will discriminate—between those who in intention and in conviction are protectionist and those who in intention and conviction are free-traders. The right hon. Gentleman, as I have said, spoke with regret, or apparent regret, of the unripeness of public opinion. I want to ask him one concluding question. Does he still feel that regret at the unripeness of public opinion ? Does he desire to see it ripen ? Will he help it to ripen ? Will he encourage or discourage in this propaganda the colleagues who surround him and are jointly responsible with him for the government of the Empire ? There are questions that we are entitled to ask. They are questions which I think the right hon. Gentleman is bound to answer; and according as he answers them in one sense or the other, so will he, and so will the Government, be judged by the nation.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Motion as it appears on the Paper has reference rather to the expressed opinions of my colleagues than to any opinions that I have made myself responsible for. ["Oh."] Well, I will withdraw that phrase, and say the Motion on the Paper referred to my colleagues and not to myself. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman referred to myself and not to my colleagues; and I do not in the least quarrel with the change of venue. I should have been perfectly ready to answer for my colleagues had they been personally attacked by the principal critic of the Government; I am perfectly ready to answer for myself, as the attack has been transferred from them to the head of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman asked me in the early part of his speech whether I adhered to the view that the fiscal programme of the Government involved a fundamental change in the policy pursued in this country for the last two generations. In my opinion it does involve that. The right hon. Gentleman has said with absolute truth, and speaking as a lawyer—that is no reproach to him—that there is no possibility of contradicting the proposition which he laid down—namely, that the Government have the power to propose in this House before a general election everything that they or their successors have the power to propose in the House after a general election. No one denies that. As a legal proposition it is incontrovertible; but I entirely differ from the right hon. Gentleman when he says to-night, as he has said on previous occasions, that it would be within the limits of constitutional propriety, as distinguished from constitutional law, to suggest to the House of Commons that we should adopt, as I hope after the next general election the Government of this country will be able to adopt, a policy dealing with what is called retaliation and a policy dealing with what is called "dumping." It is perfectly true that as far as "dumping" is concerned the sugar bounties which we have recently dealt with may be regarded as an example of that unhappy practice; but the sugar bounties have always been treated as a separate item in financial reform. I presume it is unnecessary to remind the House that while Mr. Gladstone never dealt with the general question of "dumping" in any of his speeches—because when he had to deal with questions of finance these modern developments had not occurred—he did make a distinct announcement on the subject of the sugar duties, and they had always been treated separately from the general problem of "dumping," with which I admit in abstract political economy and pure logic they are rigidly connected.

As regards retaliation, it has not since the Cobden era, certainly not for two generations, been regarded as competent for a Foreign Minister of this country to go to those with whom he is negotiating in foreign countries and to say to them, "If you impose such and such a duty on British goods I shall suggest to my Government that such and such consequences as regards your trade shall follow." I hope after the next general election it will be competent to take that course, and that for the first time within living memory it will be possible for a British negotiator to meet on equal terms, so far as commerce is concerned, those with whom he has to negotiate. Therefore it is that I regard as—should the word be a legal evasion or would it be lacking in politeness?—simply a technicality of the right hon. Gentleman and his friends when they ask, "Why do you want to have a general election to give this power?" We want this general election because it is a great and fundamental change. [OPPOSITION cheers and cries of "When?"] I gather from these cheers that those who support the right hon. Gentleman entirely agree. Then the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to put a series of questions to me about protection, and he seemed to suppose that I was properly to be described as a protectionist because I hold, as I believe every sound economist in this country for fifty years has held, that there are economic and other considerations which incidentally may justify a duty being put on which has some protective effects. I cannot believe that any hon. Member opposite denies that. Within the last three weeks right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite have made two great attacks on the Government—one in connection with fiscal reform, and the other in connection with the introduction of Oriental labour [OPPOSITION cries of "Chinese labour"] that is Oriental labour. They may be perfectly right in objecting to the introduction of Oriental labour [renewed cries of "Chinese labour"]—well, Chinese labour—into South Africa; but, as I know they have all been ardently studying the principles of political economy during the last six months, they must be perfectly well aware that their policy, however moral and however expedient, was contrary to the traditions of free trade. ["Oh, oh!"] Free trade, as any economist opposite will allow, and every student of Cobden will ardently preach, means that capital and labour throughout the world should be allowed to distribute themselves in the manner which conduces to the greatest result.

MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire): How about the compound and indentured labour?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman asks, why the compound and why the indenture?

Those are lamentable interferences with free trade, but they are much less interferences than the policy which the hon. Gentleman proposes, which is that labour should not be allowed to go into Africa at all. And all that the hon. Gentleman has proved by his interruption, and he has proved it conclusively, is that there is one point in connection with fiscal reform on which both sides are ardently agreed—namely, that there are causes which justify a departure from free-trade doctrine, and that there are issues even greater than producing in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest, and giving the consumer the best possible terms for his money. I am glad to think that on a subject on which we have disputed so much both sides of the House are agreed. [Cheers and cries of "No."]

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): Man is not a chattel.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Man is not a chattel. My hon. friend will know, if he has carried out to the full, as I am sure he has, his study of the question of economic production, that political economy does not deal only with chattels but also with the labour which produces chattels. Now, Sir, when we come from the criticism which the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has passed upon my words to the principle underlying the Motion, and the speeches of the mover and seconder, it appears to me that there is a profound confusion of ideas. It is perfectly true that every Government and every Party, so far as it is a coherent Party, must agree that for the practical work it has to do it must have a policy. [OPPOSITION cheers, and an HON. MEMBER: Declare it.] It must have a policy, and, no doubt, it must declare it. But what is not the fact, and what the House must remember has never been admitted to be the fact, is that there should be some absolute agreement as to the principles underlying that policy, and as to the theories on which it is to be defended. We are not theologians starting a religion. We are practical men on both sides. Well, on that side they are practical men who agree as to the general lines of the policy to be carried out for the benefit of the country whose interest we all, whatever our opinions, desire conscientiously to serve, and it is perfectly childish to support this new theory, that not only is the Government to be agreed as to what it proposes the House and the country should accept, but that it is to be agreed as to the exact reasons why that policy is to be adopted and is to go far beyond that policy and see what developments it may conceivably be capable of. That has never been suggested, I believe, in the whole history of the government of this country before, and I do not believe that anything will be gained by us on this side, and I am sure that everything will be lost by gentlemen on the other side, if they try to get any such doctrine accepted as sound constitutional doctrne for this country.

I quite understand why some of my hon. friends on this side who are ready loyally and fully to accept what has been called the Sheffield programme are nevertheless anxious lest in time to come there should be developments of fiscal policy with which they differ. I quite understand their position. No doubt every departure from a rigid *laisser faire* attitude is open to danger. I am the last person to deny that. There was a time in the history of this country when all thinkers who conceived themselves to represent the true intellect of the country accepted the *laisser faire* theory, not merely as regards fiscal reform, but as regards the whole field of legislative action by this House. With Mr. Cobden himself the free-trade doctrine was merely a fragment of the general *laisser faire* theory. In every other department of legislation we have abandoned the rigid *laisser faire* doctrine. I think we have rightly abandoned it. But I do not deny, and I never have denied, that in so doing we run some danger, and that there is an attractive simplicity about the abstract theory that the State should do nothing, but a real danger in the opposite doctrine that the State should do everything, which may well give pause to those who take account of any new departure. Therefore, when my hon. friends say, "We agree with the departure from *laisser faire* which you suggested in your Sheffield speech, but we fear that many who support you would go further than we are prepared to go." I understand their point of view. But let them remember that after all the remedy for that danger is not a rigid adherence to a doctrinaire policy which has became antiquated, impossible, obsolete, and absurd, but a common sense control as to the extent to which you are going to depart from that rigid policy. I, therefore, would point out to my hon. friends who feel, as I feel, that a departure is not without its dangers, that the true course for any man interested in the subject to pursue is to do his best to keep any change within reasonable limits, to get all the advantages you can from the elasticity which I hope will be given to the Government of this country, and to see that that elasticity is never abused. Then there are others who appear to think that a Resolution of the kind may do something, as it were, to petrify public opinion, and to keep our policy within the exact limits which public opinion now desires to impose upon it. No Resolution of the House, frame it as you will, is going to control in the future the movements of public opinion in this country. It will neither hasten the development of that opinion nor delay it. Supposing Mr. Gladstone in June, 1885, had proposed a Resolution committing this House and the country, as far as this House could commit the country, to a non-Home Rule policy. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose would have voted against it. [Cries of "No" and laughter.] Certainly, the genuine Party loyalty of the right hon. Gentleman and his genuine agreement with the general policy of Mr. Gladstone might have induced him to vote for a Motion with which he did not really sympathise. But with the exception of the right hon. Gentleman a Motion by Mr. Gladstone in 1885 against Home Rule would have been carried unanimously, with the exception also of the hon. Gentlemen opposite who now follow the hon. Member for Waterford. Six months passed and the whole scene was changed. [A LIBERAL MEMBER: The franchise was changed.] Yes, that may possibly have been the reason. But, at all events, the whole scene changed, and Mr. Gladstone, who had not mentioned Home Rule until after the general election, came in with a Home Rule Government. I only mention that familiar historic instance in order to show the futility of a Resolution of the House in committing either a Party or the country. And let none of my hon. friends on this side of the House, who are nervously anxious lest in some remote future the Sheffield programme should be exceeded, suppose that they will then necessarily find these Gentlemen (pointing to the Liberal Benches) on their side. Three months was enough to convert them to Home Rule. [AN HON. MEMBER: The constituencies?] What has it got to do with the constituencies—three months was enough to convert the individuals. That was Home Rule. I really do not know that so much as twelve weeks will be required under favourable circumstances to convert them to protection.

Then there is only one other cause of anxiety which I think can possibly assail my hon. friends on this side of the House with regard to the declarations of the Government. I can hardly imagine it, but it is just possible to suppose that they think those declarations not sufficiently explicit. [OPPOSITION laughter.] Well, I confess I should have thought that they had been as precise as language could make them. What I have told the country to the best of my ability—I have had no opportunity of telling the House as yet—but what I have told the country is, reckoned broadly, on the face of public documents of my own. I have told them that the policy I recommend is a policy which will enable the Government to deal, as far as retaliation can deal, with hostile tariffs, and to deal, as far as fiscal arrangements can deal, with the great evil of dumping. I have also told them, as the right hon. Gentleman has truly reminded the House, that I do not think public opinion is in a position to accept any propositions with regard to taxation of food, or fiscal union with the Colonies so far as that depends on taxation of food. Well, I cannot imagine anything being put with greater precision or with greater clearness. But let me say—and I do not think it has been sufficiently understood—that in going so far I and my friends have gone much further in the direction of taking the House and the country into their confidence than has ever happened with any Government in the history of this country. Consider the absurdity of the cross-examination which hon. Gentlemen opposite have thought themselves justified in subjecting my right hon. friends to, on this Bench, during six day's debate. Of course the Government may be cross-examined as to the policy which it is proposing to the country; of course we may be cross-examined as to our legislation, as to the foreign policy at the moment, as to our action either in the Colonies or abroad, as to our Army policy, or any of the other matters with which from day to day the Government is expected to deal. But never in the whole history of this country before has it ever been supposed that a Government is to be cross-examined, not as to its policy now, but as to the policy which it would pursue were it to be returned after the next general election. We may not be in after the next general election [OPPOSITION cheers]; I almost think I have heard declarations from very high authorities on the Front Bench opposite that in their view the current of public opinion was running so strongly against us that we should certainly not be in after the next general election. Then, I suppose they will be in—hon. Gentleman opposite—well, then, let us cross-examine them. We, at all events upon this and upon other subjects, have explicity declared what our policy is [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"]; have they declared their policy upon any subject, I do not wish to put it too highly, but upon any subject? Are they agreed on the fiscal question? I understand the Member for Waterford, an ardent supporter [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: Of both sides.]—an ardent supporter when it comes to turning us out—I understand he has explicitly declared himself to be sympathetic with doctrines which I cannot accept, but doctrines of rather advanced protection. Is there agreement, even, as to how we are to treat the Colonies, to protect the Colonies which are being attacked because they favour us in their fiscal system?

The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition was very angry with me because I, in all good faith, but perhaps mistakenly, took a version of his views as expressed, or implied last session which he thought was inaccurate or a misrepresentation of his real position. But what is the real position of the Opposition, of the people who are going to be in power after the next general election? Do they think the protection of our Colonies, like the questions connected with Chinese labour, are sufficiently important to enable them to break through the rigid doctrines of free trade, or do they not—a very interesting question, but one of which we have no solution. Some of my right hon. and hon. friends on this side of the House are strongly in favour of the policy of the Sugar Convention. That has been systematically voted against by the legitimate Opposition. [AN HON. MEMBER: And others.] Yes, because even the anti-fiscal reformers on this side are not quite agreed. There is a difference of opinion on that matter. There are many other subjects connected with fiscal reform on which I see no symptoms of that happy concordat which I should have expected among people who spend their whole time reproaching us with our differences of opinion. After all I think that fiscal reform is a very important subject, but it is not the only important subject; and I should really like to know whether any body, supposing the next Administration which I see before me were subjected to the cross-examination which, for reasons unknown to me, they think legitimate with regard to us—I should very much like to know whether they are all agreed on the subject of religious education; are they all agreed upon their Imperial policy, are they all agreed upon their domestic policy? Are the Labour Members, for example, who, I understand, accept generally the views passed at the annual meeting of the Trades Union Congress, in full accord with the gentlemen who will have to legislate after the next election upon questions of property in this country? Finally, are they agreed upon Home Rule? I was given, just before I came into the House, a very interesting question and answer which passed between the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down and one of his constituents in East Fife. I am not going to discuss Home Rule, but I am discussing the principles of Party unity and agreement, and on that question this is quite relevant. I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will be interested in this. Mr. Garvie, a constituent, asked this question—

> "Should the Liberal Party be returned to power, will Mr. Asquith support Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman in introducing a Home Rule Bill for Ireland?"

Mr. Asquith replied :—

"I have already expressed my views on that subject. That is purely an academic question, which is of no practical or political urgency."

Now, surely the position—I am assuming the results of the next general election to be what they are supposed—of witness and cross-examiner should be reversed. Surely we ought to ask these Gentlemen opposite, whom we see arrayed in their enormous and admirable variety of opinions, to come forward one by one and tell us what they think, not merely on fiscal reform, but on the great questions with which the next Parliament will have to deal. Observe this, I do not ask—I think as I have explained to the House it would be ludicrous to ask—that there should be similarity of theory underlying all the practical opinions expressed. I do not ask that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife and the hon. Gentleman who leads the Irish Party should be agreed as to their motives and reasons for any policy which they are going to pursue in common. What I do ask is that if they are going to belong to the same Party they should tell what their policy is.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): No.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: They should tell us the policy which they propose to pursue. [AN HON. MEMBER: They have not joint Cabinet responsibility.] The utmost variety of abstract opinions may be allowed, but we must have some common policy which is to be carried out. Now, Sir, I think I have indicated the general principles on which the House should come to a Resolution to-night. We, at all events, on this Bench have done what no previous Government has ever been asked to do, and certainly what no previous Government has ever done. We have stated, in other words, what it is we intend to propose at the next general election. [AN HON. MEMBER: What is it?] Well, I have already stated it once in language which will match, I think, in lucidity and explicitness anything uttered on that side of the House. What, then, are we asked to decide to-night? There are, no doubt, Members on this side of the House, a few, who, though among us, are not of us.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Put them in gaol.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: And if my diagnosis of their object is accurate, there is nothing they wish so much as to aid in the operation of substituting Gentlemen opposite for us in the government of the country. No appeal I can make to them is likely to have much effect; but the great body of Gentlemen on this side of the House I believe are prepared frankly to accept, whatever their opinions may be on other questions, what has been called the Sheffield programme. That programme I have, on my responsibility as, for the moment, the Leader of the Conservative and Unionist Party, put forward. That is the programme which, if I had to write an election address to-morrow, I should lay before the country so far as fiscal reform is concerned. I would ask those hon. Members, that great body of friends of mine, who do agree with that policy whether they think it desirable or expedient, because at some future period they may have to resist other propositions of which they disapprove—whether it is either wise or statesmanlike to throw in their lot with those from whom, even on the fiscal question, they differ so widely, and with whom, in spite of the immense variety of opinions from which they have to choose, they probably could not find any subject on which they agreed. I cannot believe that that is either a wise or a statesmanlike course. We have declared, not merely on the fiscal question, but on other questions, the policy we propose to the country. We have made no concealment of it. We have stated it in the clearest terms. Can any man who regards himself as a supporter of the Unionist Government give a vote against that Government if he agrees with the declared Sheffield policy, which is now in question? I cannot believe that that is so. I cannot believe that any Gentleman will take that course.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: Oh, no!

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: How in the struggle for existence between the two Parties can the Party which is always dwelling upon its insignificant differences successfully compete with the Party which is always endeavouring to conceal its fundamental differences? No doubt, historically, hon. Gentlemen opposite are accustomed profoundly to differ in principle and theory, but not to act practically together. They have been so inoculated by the microbe of dissension that they bear it with tolerable equanimity. Let us, whose differences are relatively absolutely microscopic, learn something from them. We have not much to learn from them, but that, I think, we may learn. If we look on that Bench and see that from the Gentlemen there is to be selected, if not the next, at all events in no distant future, a Government agreed upon a policy, knowing what are the essential differences dividing man from man, surely we have that practical knowledge of public affairs and that common sense which will enable us, as long as we are agreed upon a practical policy, not to split on speculative and future difficulties which may never arise, and not to abandon a certain and present unity because at some future and unknown epoch we may find ourselves in opposite Lobbies. For these reasons I trust that every Member of the Unionist Party who agrees with the policy which I put forward in my responsible capacity at Sheffield as the one which is to be advocated at the next general election will find it in his power to vote against the Motion proposed by the hon. and gallant Gentleman this evening.

Lord HUGH CECIL (Greenwich) said the speech of the Prime Minister was one of brilliant ability marked by all the humour with which he knew so well how to delight the House, but he thought his right hon. friend had misconceived the purpose of the Motion and the great gravity of the issue, both personally and politically, for a great number of hon. Members. The Motion was not directed against the policy of the Government, but against the policy developed by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. When the Prime Minister treated the Motion as a vote of censure on the Government he was reading into it more than it would bear. There was one phrase which did seem to reflect on

Ministers, and if the right hon. Gentleman would consent to leave the division as an open question he would move to omit that phrase. Throughout his speech the right hon. Gentleman had overlooked the fundamental fact that the great question before the country was not the policy of the Government, but the policy of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. When the right hon. Gentleman described his policy as one of retaliation it was necessary to ask for the definition of terms all along the line; and yet the right hon. Gentleman suggested that for the sake of a policy so indefinite they should be willing to support him in rejecting a Motion which did not condemn his policy, but did condemn the policy of protection. His right hon. friend said it was absurd to be so nervous, and that the Sheffield policy was the only policy that would be pressed; but surely he was aware that Members of his own Party were being driven out of candidatures, not because they would not assent to the policy of the Government, but because they would not assent to the policy of the Member for West Birmingham? If it were because they would not assent to the Government policy it would be hard enough, unless that policy were defined in all its terms; but it was much harder when it was not that policy, but a policy as to which the Government had not taken a definite attitude. Suppose a majority returned to support the policy of the Member for West Birmingham, would the Prime Minister support or would he oppose it? That was not an academical, it was a practical question. All over the country candidates were selected according to their pledges for or against that policy; he admitted that the country had taken a turn that made the situation safer; but they had a right to know whether his right hon. friend would support that policy. Without a word from his right hon. friend it would be their duty to support this Motion, a Motion directed definitely to the rejection of that policy. It was a Motion in favour of free trade and against protection. His right hon. friend spoke of "those who are among us, but not of us." Did his right hon. friend apply that term to him?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, no, emphatically, no. I may differ from my noble friend on some questions, but emphatically I say I do not include him among those I mentioned. I say he is of us.

LORD HUGH CECIL said it could not have escaped his right hon. friend's ears that many of his supporters did not agree with him. He differed from the policy of the Member for West Birmingham and also from the policy of driving out of the Party Members who had been treated in a manner which was not encouraging to loyal co-operation in the ranks of the Party. He was accepted by his right hon. friend as a Conservative, and believing with his whole heart that in Conservatism lay the true future of the country, he was most anxious to preserve it from contamination by protection, which would degrade its character and ruin all chance of it being the National Party of the future as in the past. Within the Party he wished to fight the battle and save it from that danger that threatened it and the ruin that would overwhelm it, and for that reason he would vote for this Motion and for every Motion that was emphatically in favour of the principle of free trade.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said everybody admitted the absolute sincerity of the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich. He hoped that he would be credited with equal sincerity when he referred to a single sentence near the close of the speech of his right hon. friend the Prime Minister, lest it might afterwards be said that by their silence they gave it their consent. The Prime Minister said, if he were to write an address to his constituents to-morrow it would be written in the sense of the policy laid down at Sheffield. He believed that all on this side of the House agreed with that policy, or nearly all, so far as it went. But he should be misleading his right hon. friend, and misleading many others, if he were not to say that if he had to write an election address it would be of a somewhat different character, going a great deal further than the Prime Minister, and he had the best reason in the world for knowing that he would be expressing the opinions of a very large number of Members of the Party.

Question put.

The House divided: Ayes, 243; Noes, 289. (Division List No. 46.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork N E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith Rt Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bowles T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh
Brunner Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Channing, Francis Allston
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William

Cullinan, J.
Dalzier, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Delany, William
Denny, Colonel
DevlinCharlesRamsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dewar, John A (Inverness-sh.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellice CaptEC(S.Andrew'sBghs
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Evans Sir Francis H(Maidstone
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan
Eve, Harry, Trelawney
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmund
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Goddard, Daniel Ford

Gorst Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (Berwick)
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hain, Edward
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hamilton Rt Hn LordG(Midd'x
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt Hon Sir William
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol,E.)
Hobhouse Rt Hn H Somerse'tE
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor Swansea
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.

Lord Hugh Cecil.

Langley, Batty
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Randall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Morley, Charles (Breconshire
Morley Rt Hon John (Montrose
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Noland, Joseph (Louth, South
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willians
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, William
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N,
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaugnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rae, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rigg, Richard
Ritchie Rt Hon Chas. Thomson
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely Maj J E B. (Isle of Wight)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn C R (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomas, Sir A (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Wallace, Robert
Walton, John Lawson (Leeds S
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart Orkney
Weir, James Galloway
White, George Norfolk
White, Luke York, E. R.
Whiteley, George York, W. R.
Whitley, J. H. Halifax
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond Merioneth
Wilson, Fred W. (Norfolk, Mid)
Woodhouse Sir J T. Huddersf'd
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Allhusen Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Fortser Rt Hn Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt Hon Sir H
Bagot, Capt Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James Walworth
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt Hon. A. S. Manch'r
Balfour, Capt C. B. Hornsey
Balfour Rt Hn Gerald W Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banes, Major George Edward
Barry, Sir Francis T. Windsor
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst Hon Allen Benjamin
Beach Rt Hn Sir Michael Hicks
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles Lt.-Col H F (Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J H. M (Dublin Univ
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V C W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Ashton Manor
Chamberlain Rt Hn J A (Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius, Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savil
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies Sir Horatio D (Chatham
Dewar Sir T R (Tower Hamlets
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale Rt. Hon Sir Joseph C
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland Sir Fred Dixon
Dorington Rt. Hon. Sir John E
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt Hon Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)

Fardell, Sir T. George
Fergusson Rt Hon Sir J(Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hon Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. Warwick S. W.
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Gordon, Hn J E (Elgin & Nairn
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon Maj Evans-(Tr'H'mlets
Gore, Hn G R C Ormsby-(Salop
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, James (Staffords N. W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J F (Sheffield Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt Hon Sir John H.
Kenyon Hon Geo. T. (Denbighs
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson John Grant (Yorks N R
Lee, Arthur H (Hants., Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leverson-Gower, Frederick N S
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W (Evesham
Long, Rt Hn Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Col Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn W. F.
Maxwell Rt Hn Sir H E (Wigt'n
Maxwell W J H (Dumfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson Sir H. M.
Middlemore John Throgmorton
Milner, Rt Hon Sir Frederick G
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Molesworth, Sir Louis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan David J (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hon M. W. (Stalybridge
Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel Sir Harry S (Limehouse
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Saunderson Rt Hn. Col. Edw. J
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Stanley, Hon Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Edward Jas (Somerset
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs)
Stewart, Sir Mark J M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt Hn J G. (Oxf'd Univ
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent Col Sir C E H (Sheffield
Walrond, Rt Hn Sir William H.
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Sir Charles G E (Notts.)
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby, de Eresby Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson A. Stanley (York E R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W H. (Yorks)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn E R (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 10th March, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Bristol Tramways (Extensions) [H.L.]; Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway [H.L.]. The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Marylebone Chapels (Saint James, Westmoreland Street) Bill—(Petition for Bill) ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to introduce the Bill. Read, and agreed to.

Huddersfield Corporation Act, 1902 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]. A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

St. Bartholomew's Hospital Bill [H.L.]. The Lord BALFOUR informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn.

Appleby Corporation Gas Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 19th of February and Thursday last, discharged, and Bill committed.

Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 19th of February and Thursday last, discharged, and Bill committed for Tuesday next.

Barnard Castle Gas Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 19th and the 26th of February last, discharged, and Bill committed.

New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company Bill [H.L.]. Committee to meet on Tuesday next.

Southend Water Bill. Read 2ª, and committed.

HUTCHESONS' HOSPITAL AND HUTCHESONS' EDUCATIONAL TRUST BILL [H.L.].

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: My Lords, I should like to ask the noble Lord whether he really proposes to enforce the Second Reading of this Bill on the present occasion. This is a Bill promoted by a majority, and a majority only, of the Governors of the Trust. The Trust was constituted under the Act of 1882 and has been in force since 1885, and under it the income was divided in certain proportions between education and charity. Nine of the Governors out of fifteen now put forward this Bill, which proposes to alter the application of the funds of the Trust and to do away with the settlement made in 1885 under the public law of 1882. By this Bill it is proposed to allot to charity a much larger sum than was settled under that Act. The promoters of the Bill are opposed by the other six Governors, and I may observe that they have no power whatever to devote the funds of the Trust to the promoting of a Bill of this kind, which is an entirely *ex parte* application of their own. Moreover, they are to be opposed by the School Board, with whom, I believe, they made an arrangement a year or two ago, which at that time was satisfactory to the School Board but which the School Board now repudiates. It is currently reported that a Bill is to be introduced in another place dealing with higher and technical education, and it is not improbable that

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

certain alterations will be made in the existing law. That being so, is it desirable at this time to proceed with a private Bill which proposes to upset what was done under the public Act of Parliament and in pursuance of the recommendations of the Commission which was presided over by the noble Lord himself? Is it desirable to incur all the expense of an opposition before this House and possibly the other House of Parliament at the present time? I do not move the rejection of the Bill because I think that might be possibly too strong a course to take, but I put it to the noble Lord that it is not desirable to read this Bill a second time at present. It should, at all events, be postponed until we see what are the provisions of the public Act. If, after that, the promoters think it worth while to persevere, that is another matter; but in the meantime I would ask the noble Lord to postpone the Second Reading.

THE ACTING CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH): The noble Lord will, of course, understand that I am acting purely in a Ministerial capacity as Chairman of Committees, and that my moving the Second Reading of the Bill implies no opinion whatever either for or against the merits of this particular proposal. The circumstances are that this measure was proposed under the Scottish Private Bill Procedure Act last year, and it was resolved that it should stand over till this year and come up as a Private Bill. The noble Earl has stated the facts in regard to it, with which he will easily understand I am perfectly familiar, and I agree that they are facts which should be brought to the notice of the House. But I have not myself, in any way, gone into the merits of this proposal, and I do not intend now to discuss them or to express any opinion for or against them. As the noble Earl knows, and as probably the majority of your Lordships know, I should be in a peculiarly difficult position if I were to do so, because this Bill constitutes an appeal against the decision of a Commission of which I was Chairman. The circumstances may, or may not, have changed; that is a fair matter for discussion before a Committee of your Lordships' House upstairs. The noble Earl has alluded to the fact, which is perfectly well known, that a Bill dealing with Scottish education generally is likely to be presented to Parliament before long, and he very rightly brings publicly to the notice of the promoters of this Bill that perhaps they may be rather uselessly spending money on a contest at this particular time. There can be no chance of this Bill going before a Committee this side of the Easter recess, and I do not think anybody will be prejudiced by a short postponement of the Second Reading. I think that probably the most satisfactory course would be for me to postpone the Second Reading for a week, and for the promoters to consider in the meantime whether they will press the Second Reading before Easter or wait till a later date. It is not for me to say whether the Second Reading should, or should not, be moved on behalf of the promoters. If it will meet the noble Earl's wishes, I am perfectly willing now to consent to the adjournment of the Second Reading till this day week, to give all the parties a further opportunity of considering their respective positions.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: I do not think that a week's adjournment makes very much difference, and I beg to give notice that if it is moved a week hence, I shall take objection to the Second Reading. In the meantime, of course, I accept what the noble Lord proposes.

Second Reading (which stands appointed for this day) put off to Thursday next.

Belfast Corporation (Tramways) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order), and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

St. Bartholomew's Hospital Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order), and committed.

Blyth and Cowpen Gas Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIES (ANNUAL).

No. 414. Jamaica (Report for 1902-1903).

LOAN FUND BOARD OF IRELAND.

Sixty-sixth Annual Report for 1903.

INEBRIATES ACTS, 1879 TO 1900.

First Report of the Inspector for Scotland under the Inebriates Acts, for the period to 31st December, 1903.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Western Division of Scotland, for the year 1903.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ARMY (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).

Statement of the amount due by the public to depositors in Military Savings Banks on the 31st March, 1902, and of the receipts, interest, and disbursements in the said Military Savings Banks during the year next ensuing, ended on the 31st March, 1903, etc.

ASSIZES ACTS, 1876 AND 1879.

Two Orders in Council of the 7th March, 1904, relating to the ensuing Spring Assizes.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACTS, 1878 AND 1889.

Order in Council of 7th March, 1904, fixing the fee for the verification and stamping of 50lb. weights.

EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 TO 1895, AND FUGITIVE OFFENDERS ACT, 1881.

Two Orders in Council of the 7th March, 1904, giving effect to Chapters II. and IV. of the Indian Extradition Act, 1903.

EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 TO 1895.

Order in Council of 7th March, 1904, directing that the Extradition Act, 1903, of the Commonwealth of Australia, shall have effect as if it were part of the "Extradition Act, 1870."

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890, AND MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Order in Council of the 7th March, 1904, declaring the port of Old Calabar to be a port of registry for British shipping.

CHURCH TEMPORALITIES (IRELAND).

Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General upon the account of the Irish Land Commission in respect of Church Temporalities in Ireland, for the year ended 31st March, 1903, together with the account for the above period, and that from 26th July, 1869 (the date of the Irish Church Act), to 31st March, 1903.

POLICE (COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS ENGLAND AND WALES).

Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary, for the year ended 29th September, 1903.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).

Statutory Rules and Orders, 1904, No. 274; Postal Order (New Zealand) Regulations.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie upon the Table.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES (METRIC SYSTEM) BILL [H.L.].

The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be printed, but no copies to be delivered out, except to members of the Committee, and to such other persons as the Committee shall think fit, until further order. (No. 26.)

LORD ROSEBERY AND MR. BALFOUR.

The Earl of ROSEBERY: My Lords, I rise, to put a Question to the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of which I have given him private notice. I wish to ask him what justification there is for the use of the word "calumny" by the Prime Minister with reference to the comments I have made on Lord George Hamilton's speech at Ealing. I am sorry that I was not able to give earlier notice than this morning, but I did not at first observe the word "calumny," and it was not till this morning that it was brought to my attention. It is true that the Prime Minister used very freely the words "glosses" and "misrepresentations"; but those, after all, are idle expressions, and though they excite my curiosity quite as much to know what can have given rise to them as does the word "calumny" itself, I should not have thought it worth while to trouble your Lordships with the matter had it not been for the gravity of the word which the Prime Minister employed. I have been at pains to examine the latest authority on the English language—Dr. Murray's Dictionary—on the meaning of the word "calumny," and it fully confirms my view as to the gravity of the expression employed. It is said to mean—"false and malicious misrepresentation of the words or actions of others, calculated to injure their reputation; libellous detraction, slander." I ask the noble Marquess, who, I hope, has had an opportunity of communicating with the Prime Minister, what justification there is for the characterisation by the Prime Minister of my remarks as "a calumny."

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, I am not sure that it is altogether regular for a Minister in this House to explain to your Lordships the language used by one of his colleagues in the other House. But, in the circumstances, I shall certainly not shelter myself behind the technical plea, and I will endeavour to answer as succinctly as possible the noble Earl's Question. Lord George Hamilton, speaking at Ealing in October last, made this statement—

> "On the last day of the session the Cabinet met and we had before us two documents—a pamphlet entitled 'Insular Free Trade,' and another document containing the proposals the Prime Minister wished officially to put forward in the name of the Government. Preferential tariffs and taxation of food were included in that programme. We agreed to the publication of the first document. We differed as to the acceptance of the proposals in the second."

My Lords, what were the facts? There were, as by this time it is generally known, two documents.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: Hear, hear! At last we have that.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: One of them was a document written by the Prime Minister, for the ultimate purpose of publication. It is the pamphlet which most of your Lordships have had in your hands, and it is entitled "Insular Free Trade." At or about the same time the Prime Minister placed in the hands of his colleagues another document of a different character. It was written entirely for his colleagues, and was in that form with which those Members of your Lordships' House who have served in the Cabinet are familiar—the form of a confidential Cabinet Memorandum. That Paper we are obviously precluded from producing, and I therefore cannot quote it. I should not imagine that any Member of your Lordships' House would desire that we should establish a practice of making public and laying before Parliament Memoranda or Minutes written in these circumstances by one member of the Government for the information of his colleagues. But, my Lords, this I am prepared to say—that my noble friend Lord George Hamilton is, in my opinion, under considerable misapprehension, both as to the purport of that second document and as to its relation to the published Paper, and also as to the manner in which it was treated by his colleagues. I may be allowed to add without, I think, being guilty of indiscretion—that in the unpublished Paper the Prime Minister expressed the hope that his colleagues would not dissent from the conclusions to be found at the end of the pamphlet on "Insular Free Trade." I should like to remind your Lordships of what is to be found in the concluding paragraph of that latter document. It runs as follows—

> "I hold myself to be in harmony with the true spirit of free trade when I plead for freedom to negotiate, that freedom of exchange may be increased. . . . The first and most essential objects of our national efforts should be to get rid of the bonds in which we have gratuitously entangled ourselves. The precise manner in which we should use our regained liberty (a subject I do not propose to discuss in this paper) is an important, yet, after all, only a secondary issue. What is fundamental is that our liberty should be regained."

I now come to the speeches of the noble Earl. Speaking at Leicester on 8th November he used these words—

> "We know that on the last day of the session Mr. Balfour presented to his Cabinet, not one, but two pamphlets. One pamphlet, which we have the priceless privilege of purchasing—though somewhat, perhaps, jejune, and even obscure, dwelt principally, largely, on the great prosperity of the country. It also urged retaliation. But we now know that the Prime Minister produced from his resources a second pamphlet, which he offered as the policy of the Government, and which contained the full scheme of preferential tariffs, including the food tax, which had been advocated by Mr. Chamberlain. And when that policy was rejected, the Prime Minister calmly put it back in his pocket until a more fitting occasion. . . . And the Prime Minister sits with a pamphlet in each pocket. . . . ready to produce the pamphlet or the programme as may suit the occasion as a general election may guide."

The first point to which I have to call attention is that the noble Earl's interpretation of Lord George Hamilton's speech was repudiated by Lord George Hamilton himself.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: When?

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: On 13th January, 1904, Lord George Hamilton wrote this letter to the editor of the *Daily Mail*—

> "It is not my habit to notice the ordinary personal attacks to which every public man is liable and which from time to time appear in the Press. But in your leading article of 12th January you impugn my veracity by stating that Mr. Balfour flatly contradicted a statement I made at Ealing as to two documents which were under the consideration of the Cabinet. Mr. Balfour in no way traversed my statement, but he very properly repudiated the gloss put upon it by Lord Rosebery."

If Lord George Hamilton's statement did not correctly represent the attitude of the Prime Minister, your Lordships will scarcely differ from me when I say that the speech of the noble Earl still more grievously misrepresented it. There was a second speech of the noble Earl's, delivered on 12th December, but I need not quote it as it virtually repeats what was said in the Leicester speech. It is impossible to read these speeches without remaining under the impression that the noble Earl imputed to the Prime Minister, conduct which I can only describe as wanting in good faith. It seems to me that he charged him with an attempt to trick his colleagues, to trick Parliament, and the people of this country. I do not think it is a matter of surprise that the Prime Minister should have felt himself called upon to repudiate with a certain amount of warmth, the imputations—for I cannot otherwise describe them—of the noble Earl below the gangway. Your Lordships should, moreover, remember that the Prime Minister, on more than one occasion, had given an emphatic contradiction to the story of the two conflicting pamphlets which he was supposed to have in his pocket available for use as circumstances might dictate. He spoke at Manchester of that story as an "amazing legend." In the House of Commons a few days ago he stated categorically that there was no second document which could be described as an alternative document to "Insular Free Trade," and again he denied that there were two documents similar in character but opposite in opinion. Two days ago, however, this question was once more brought up in the House of Commons; and upon that occasion I find that the Prime Minister spoke of the repeated attacks made upon him by the noble Earl, and complained that the noble Earl had misrepresented him; and then, in reply to an interruption which for a moment diverted the course of the debate, he certainly used the expression "calumny" of the charge made by the noble Earl. I have had an opportunity of conferring with the Prime Minister as to this episode, and I am able to state to the noble Earl and to your Lordships that nothing was further from the mind of the Prime Minister than to impute to the noble Earl a deliberate attempt to misrepresent him. But the Prime Minister certainly did regard the charge in itself as a calumnious charge. The noble Earl was, I think, misled to begin with by the statement originally made by Lord George Hamilton. He amplified and developed that statement, with the result that, perhaps without realising how far his words went he held up the Prime Minister to obloquy for what I cannot describe otherwise than as a breach of good faith towards his colleagues. In these circumstances the Prime Minister has not unnaturally repelled the charge in language which, no doubt, was warm, but which I do not think was exaggerated or unjustified by the facts of the case.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: My Lords, I must offer a few observations on the statement to which we have just listened; and in order to put myself in order I will move the Adjournment of the House. The noble Marquess began his statement, on which I must congratulate him as being more frank than those statements of which we have read in another place, by saying that it was somewhat inconvenient and somewhat unusual to call Ministers to account in this House for language used by their colleagues in the other House. The noble Marquess has been in the House longer than I have, but he has not, perhaps, sat in it so long, owing to high appointments abroad; otherwise he would know that one of the difficulties of the Governments of which I have been a member in former times has been to answer Questions with regard to language held by their colleagues elsewhere which was not agreeable to Members of the Opposition. I remember particularly a most awkward question asked with regard to the language held by Mr. Gladstone about this House being "up in a balloon," which I remember even the tact and skill of Lord Granville had great difficulty in dealing with to the satisfaction of your Lordships. I am exceedingly glad that this conversation has taken place, because we have at last obtained from the noble Marquess what all the energy and skill of the House of Commons have failed to extract from the Prime Minister —namely, an exact account of what took place with regard to these two documents. The Prime Minister, indeed, never allowed the description of "document" to be applied to the second "written thing," as it is now described, presented to the Cabinet in August; but we have, at any rate, got thus far. There were two documents presented to the Cabinet, but one was for publication by the thousand and the other was not to be seen except by the Cabinet. We have been told something of the concluding sentence of the document, and in that way I venture to say that we have got more illumination than from all the speeches Mr. Balfour has made on the subject.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I hope that I did not mislead the noble Earl, but the concluding sentence which I quoted was from "Insular Free Trade."

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: Yes; but the sentence which the noble Marquess quoted was one in which the unknown document did end with a request to his colleagues, or the expression of a pious aspiration that his colleagues would all agree to the last sentence of the pamphlet on "Insular Free Trade." I think that is an accurate summary. The point is one which the noble Marquess seems to have failed to grasp, and I am glad he has failed to grasp it, for otherwise we should not have had his interesting explanation. The point is not what actually took place, but what Lord George Hamilton said had taken place, which was all that was before the public. Therefore we are greatly obliged to the noble Marquess for the narrative he has given us. It does not bear, or only remotely bears, on the question I put to him. My question was what justification there was for the use of the word "calumny," of which I stated the gravity, in reference to comments I had thought it right to make on the statement of Lord George Hamilton at Ealing. It is no answer to that to say that the statement of Lord George Hamilton at Ealing was inaccurate. It is no answer to say that Lord George Hamilton subsequently contradicted it himself, because the noble Marquess, somewhat less ingenuous than in the rest of his statement, failed to remark that Lord George Hamilton's contradiction did not come until after the three speeches I had made on the subject had been already delivered. Therefore, the contradiction as against my speeches has no weight whatever.

Now you have from the Foreign Secretary what was the language of Lord George Hamilton, and he has also read my speech. Nothing is more loathsome than to refer to old speeches except to help to make new ones; but I am bound to say, recurring to the speech to which the noble Marquess has referred—that of 7th November—I can find nothing in it which taken with the text of Lord George Hamilton's speech, deserves the strong expression of "calumny." "We know that on the last day of the session Mr. Balfour presented to his Cabinet, not one, but two pamphlets." I was wrong to use the words "two pamphlets." I withdraw the word "pamphlet"; but surely the misunderstanding is not worthy of the stigma of calumny. "One pamphlet, which we have the priceless privilege of purchasing"—that is true—"though somewhat, perhaps, jejune, and even obscure"—that is a matter of opinion but not a calumny—"dwelt principally, largely, on the great prosperity of the country"—that again, cannot be considered a calumny. "It also urged retaliation"—that is a fact—"but we now know that the Prime Minister produced from his resources a second pamphlet"—I have withdrawn the word "pamphlet"—"which he offered as the policy of the Government, and which contained the full scheme of preferential tariffs, including the food tax, which had been advocated by Mr. Chamberlain." Lord George Hamilton said it was a document which contained substantive propositions which were proposed on behalf of the Government and officially put forward; and these propositions embraced preferential tariffs and the taxation of food. I venture to say that my statement in the speech is an under-statement given of that document as compared with the description given of it by Lord George Hamilton. The document has disappeared. It is apparently never to appear, and so I said—

> "And when that policy was rejected, the Prime Minister calmly put it back in his pocket until a more fitting occasion."

What calumny is there in that? I do not know whether he did put it in his pocket; he may have put it in a box; but for the Prime Minister to come down to the House of Commons and to bang the Table and call it a "calumny" is a procedure I should have thought no one who ever held that position was capable of. There was another sentence which the gentleman who has copied the speech for me has omitted, but which the noble Marquess may supply me with. It is the portion about the alternative policy in my speech at Leicester. Would you mind reading it? [The noble Earl resumed his seat, in the expectation, apparently, that Lord Landsdowne would read the extract, but the Foreign Secretary handed the extracts across the Table for the noble Earl to make his own selection. Lord Rosebery found that the passage he sought was apparently not included in the documents, and he continued.] It was a sentence to the effect that the Prime Minister was ready to produce either policy as a general election might dictate. Is that a libel? Is that a calumny? I cannot go so far into the general question as to debate it this evening; but I venture to say that no one who has read the debates or the speeches delivered in this country, no one, particularly, who has read the debate on the Motion of Mr. Morley, can fail to see that there is ample ground for an opinion of that kind. When the Government puts forward alternatively a protectionist and a free-trader to represent them, no one can help seeing that their attitude is one of animated expectation, a waiting for a general election which shall guide them in the policy they shall afterwards pursue. But that is, after all, a matter of opinion. I maintain, however, that it is a matter of fair political inference from the statement of Lord George Hamilton and the statements of the Government themselves; and I venture to say that no Minister of whom we have record has been so thin-skinned, in circumstances such as we have witnessed, as to regard as a calumny a statement of opinion so obviously dictated by the facts. I suppose these are the glosses, this the misrepresentation, and this the calumny of which the Prime Minister complained. I should have thought, after reading the speeches in the other House, that there was more he had to complain of than mine, but as we are talking about glosses, let me remind the Prime Minister that he who lives in a glass house should not be too ready to throw stones. When speaking at Manchester, how did he describe the speech which we have heard read out? He said—

> "Lord Rosebery has given circulation to an amazing legend that I went down to the second Cabinet in August and presented to my colleagues two alternative pamphlets recommending two inconsistent and mutually destructive policies"—

Whoever said a word about inconsistent and mutually destructive policies? I regard the one policy as a half-way house to the other. A man who uses expressions of that kind should not complain of the glosses of others—

> "And asked them to take their choice."

Your Lordships may judge from the speech of Lord George Hamilton whether I was not warranted in making that statement. My Lords, the noble Marquess has not in the least withdrawn the expression used by the Prime Minister. He has said that the Prime Minister used in the heat of debate the expression, which I do not think he even regretted, but he did afterwards say, and the noble Marquess adopted the expression, that the statements were calumnious. You may say that is only "pretty Fanny's way," but if these are the expressions of a gentleman speaking under great heat and provocation—I say that if a man cannot curb his tongue better than that "pretty Fanny" should not be First Lord of the Treasury. I say these expressions are outrages on the good taste and decency of Parliament. I have thought it due to the decency of Parliament to call attention to the matter—not that I care one farthing what language Mr. Balfour may use about me or the opinions I hold, but to point out to your Lordships that there are decencies of debate which should be observed even by those who occupy the highest political posts in the country. I move the adjournment of the House.

Moved, That this House do now adjourn—(*The Earl of Rosebery.*)

*EARL SPENCER: My Lords, it is rather inconvenient to prolong a discussion of which we have had no notice, but I think there is something more due to my noble friend than has fallen from the noble Marquess the Leader of the House. I venture to support what my noble friend has said. There are various ways of dealing with what one opponent says of another, but it is a very strong thing indeed, particularly for a man in the great position of Prime Minister, to use the word "calumny" and apply it to the arguments of another politician, who, he must know, is a man of honour, and not likely to exaggerate or distort. Calumny is a terrible word to use. It means a wanton misrepresentation of what has taken place. How can anybody suppose that the noble Earl would wantonly try to misrepresent what has been said by the Prime Minister or any other politician? I think what the noble Marquess has said is a most inadequate explanation of what has taken place, and of what has been said by the Prime Minister. As the noble Earl himself has said, the noble Marquess did not withdraw the word "calumny." He admitted it was strong, but according to the noble Marquess, he said there was little doubt these misrepresentations were of a calumnious nature. I think, therefore, we on this side are bound to support the noble Earl.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: Before the Question is put, I want just to read what was said by Lord George Hamilton himself in the debate on Monday night in winding up the discussion. He said—

> "I wrote that part of the speech out with that document before me. I have read that document again in the last few hours, and I adhere to every syllable of what I said to my constituents."

On Question, Motion disagreed to.

The Earl of Rosebery.

WILD BIRDS PROTECTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 1.

*THE MARQUESS OF GRANBY explained that the effect of the Amendments standing in his name would be to make the operative clause of the Bill read as follows—

> "From and after the passing of this Act every person who, on any pole, tree, or cairn of stones or earth, shall affix, place, or set any spring, trap, gin, or other similar instrument calculated to cause bodily injury to any wild bird coming in contact therewith, and every person who shall knowingly permit or suffer or cause any such trap to be so affixed, placed, or set, shall be guilty of an offence, and shall be liable on summary conviction to a penalty not exceeding forty shillings, and for a second or subsequent offence to a penalty not exceeding five pounds."

He thought this would meet all the objections that had been raised to the Bill.

Amendment moved—

> "In Clause 1, page 1, line 6, to leave out the word 'wall.'"—(*The Marquess of Granby.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

> "In Clause 1, page 1, line 6, to leave out from the word 'wall' to the word 'shall' in line 7, and to insert the words 'or cairn of stones or earth.'"—(*The Marquess of Granby.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 1, as Amended, agreed, to.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3.

*THE MARQUESS OF GRANBY said the object of his Amendment was to simplify the wording of Clause 3; it was really nothing more than a drafting Amendment.

Amendment moved—

> "In Clause 3, page 1, line 18, to leave out from the word 'Protection' to the word 'and' in line 21, and to insert the words 'Acts 1880 to 1902.'"—(*The Marquess of Granby.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Bill recommitted to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 28.)

BISHOPRIC OF BRISTOL BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to order.)

Clause 1.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF BRISTOL moved to amend Sub-section (a) of Clause 1 by adding the ecclesiastical parish of Falfield, in the rural deanery of Dursley, to the other parishes which were included in the scheme.

Amendment moved—

"In line 12, to leave out the word 'both,' and to insert the words 'and Falfield, all.'"—(*The Lord Bishop of Bristol.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF BRISTOL said that in omitting from the clause the words contained in his second Amendment the object was to form a new deanery of Thornbury.

Amendment moved—

"In line 12, to leave out the words, 'and for including the parishes aforesaid in the rural deanery of Hawkesbury.'"—(*The Lord Bishop of Bristol.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 1, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 2, agreed to.

Bill recommitted to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 29.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

*EARL SPENCER: It would be convenient if the noble Marquess could state what arrangements have been made as to the Adjournment of the House for the Easter recess.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: The matter is one entirely for your Lordships. It has been suggested to me that we might rise on the 25th of this month, and reassemble on 19th April; and I think we might agree to that provisionally.

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 10th March, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz.:—London United Tramways Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Whitby Gas Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time) Bill (by Order). Considered; to be read the third time.

Barnet District Gas and Water Bill (by Order). Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next (Evening Sitting).

Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thornaby Tramways Bill. "For conferring further powers on the Imperial Tramways Company, Limited; for constructing tramways, and widening and altering roads, and acquiring lands in the North Riding of the county of York; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Sheffield, Laughton, and Maltby Railway Bill. Order [9th February] that the Bill be committed, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

London County Council (General Powers) Bill. Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Kettering Improvement Bill. Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

Petition from Hackney, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of law; from Derby; Urmston (two); Lancaster; Birmingham (two); Hammersmith; Trowbridge; Bardney; Louth; Epworth; Gwaun-le-Gurwen; Bolton; Ashton on Mersey; Dorrington; Eccles; Rowlands Castle; Whiteinch; Fareham; Mansell Lacy; Staines; Exmouth; Wolverhampton; Ossett; London; Ovenden; Shettleston; Arbroath; Notting Hill; Christchurch; Llangollen; Boston; Belper; Great Yarmouth; Bristol; Llwynhendy; Hornchurch; Tredegarville; Market Rasen; and Belton; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.

Petitions against; from Worksop; Staines; Barking; Edmonton; Basingstoke; Hutchesontown; Lambeth; Upton Park; Bath; Brixton; Battersea (two); Kington; Southampton; Aldershot; Leominster; Edmonton; Southend; Hull (two); Leyton; Notting Hill; Spalding; Wandsworth; North Kensington; Briningham (four); Portsmouth (two); Canterbury; Streatham; Hammersmith; High Barnet; Walthamstow; Melton Mowbray; Bristol (two); Edinburgh; Eastville; Hamilton; Harringay; Chatham; Folkestone; Bilston; Mansfield; Worcester (two); Boston; Hastings; Larkhall; Cambuslang; Coatbridge; Wishaw; Leicester; and Swindon; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Wolstanton, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

TOWN HOLDINGS (TERMINABLE LEASES).

Petition from Blackrock, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOUR ORDINANCE).

Petition from Altrincham, for withdrawal; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).

Copy presented, of Statement of the Amounts due by the Public to Depositors on 31st March, 1902, and of the Receipts, Interest, and Disbursements during the year ended 31st March, 1903, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 91.]

CYPRUS.

Copy presented, of Annual Report on Cyprus for 1902–3 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POLICE (COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS, ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy presented, of Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary for the year ended 29th September, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 92.]

ASSIZES ACTS, 1876 AND 1879.

Copies presented, of two Orders in Council of 7th March, 1904, relating to the ensuing Spring Assizes [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890, AND MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 7th March, 1904, declaring the Port of Old Calabar to be a Port of Registry for British Shipping [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 TO 1895.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 7th March, 1904, directing that The Extradition Act, 1903, of the Commonwealth of Australia shall have effect as if it were part of The Extradition Act, 1870 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 TO 1895 (FUGITIVE OFFENDERS ACT, 1881).

Copies presented, of two Orders in Council of the 7th March, 1904, giving effect to Chapters II. and IV. of The Indian Extradition Act, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACTS, 1878 AND 1889.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 7th March, 1904, fixing the fee for the verification and stamping of 50 lb. weights [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORTS).

Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Western Division of Scotland for the year 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY (GUNNERY).

Copy presented, of Results of Prize Firing in His Majesty's Fleet, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Irish Land Commission (Account). Copy of Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General upon the Account of the Irish Land Commission for the year ended 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 93.]

NAVAL EXPENDITURE.

Return ordered, "of Naval Expenditure of this Country in the years 1880, 1890, 1900, 1901, 1902, and 1903, and of the Naval Expenditure of France, Russia, Germany, and America in the same years."—(*Sir Edgar Vincent.*)

EAST INDIA (INCOME AND EXPENDITURE).

Address for "Return of the Net Income and Expenditure of British India, under certain specified heads, for the eleven years from 1892–3 to 1902–3 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 95, of session 1903)."—(*Sir Henry Fowler.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Increased Penalties for Illegal Trawling.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if the Bill providing for the more efficacious punishment of offending trawlers, which was under the consideration of the Secretary for Scotland and the Lord Advocate last year, will shortly be presented.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) I may refer the hon. Member to my reply to a similar Question on Monday last.†

Scotch Education—Modern Group Leaving Certificates.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if the Scotch Education Department has granted a special modern group leaving certificate for Glasgow High School for Girls; and whether this group will under similar conditions be extended to all other schools.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) Upon the application of the School Board and upon the basis of a curriculum arranged by conference with the school authorities the Department has agreed to grant a special group leaving certificate for the Glasgow High School for Girls. It is open to any other school to make such an application, and if a satisfactory arrangement can be made as to curriculum, a similar group certificate would be granted.

Grievances of Postal Employees—Report of Committee.

MR. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): To ask the Postmaster-General if he can state when he expects to receive the Report of the Committee appointed last session to inquire into the grievances of the postal employees; and if he will lay the Report upon the Table of the House before the Post Office Vote is taken.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The Committee appointed in August last to inquire into the scales of pay of certain classes of established post office servants has taken evidence on the matters referred to it, but I am unable to say when the Committee will present its Report.

Reorganisation of Macedonian Gendarmerie.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is yet in a position to give any further information as to the reorganisation of the gendarmerie in Macedonia, in particular the names of the British officers appointed; whether they have started from England; what are the areas to which the different gendarmerie battalions are to be allocated; and whether any British non-commissioned officers have been appointed to this service.

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† See page 309.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) As soon as the demands submitted to the Porte by the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Ambassadors have been accepted, and the General charged with the reorganisation of the gendarmerie leaves Constantinople for the purpose of taking up his duties, he will be met at Salonica by ten officers and eleven non-commissioned officers from England. The names of the officers and areas to which the several battalions are to be allocated cannot yet be given.

Reformed Fiscal System for Holland.

MR. CLAUDE LOWTHER (Cumberland, Eskdale): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can say whether Holland has decided to reform her fiscal system, by the adoption of a retaliatory policy and a protective tariff; and, if so, whether he can lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the Netherlands Government's proposals; and if he will state the remaining countries, if any, which impose no duties apart from purposes of revenue.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) Copies of the Netherlands Tariff Bill have been received and forwarded to the Board of Trade for examination in concert with the Chambers of Commerce. Pending the result of the examination, I am not able to make any statement as to the character and objects of the proposed tariff, which has still to receive legislative sanction. We have no official information of the object with which Customs duties are imposed by foreign countries. The question of laying a translation of the proposed tariff upon the Table of the House will be considered.

Public-House Licences—Renewals Refused.

MR. CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what number of public-house licences have this year been refused renewal on the ground that they were not required; and what number were refused renewal on that and other grounds; and if he can state what proportion such numbers bear to the numbers refused last year, and also to the average number of refusals during the five years prior to that year.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The information necessary to answer this Question is not yet available. Adjournments of the General Annual Licensing Meeting may take place up to the 14th of the present month, and it may be that in some places the business is not yet completed.

Parliamentary Grants to the Halsall Girls' School, Great Crosby.

MR. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if he will state what is the total sum received in Parliamentary Grants of all kinds, since the year 1870, by the Halsall Girls' School, Great Crosby, Lancashire.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The total sum which has been received in Parliamentary Grants by this school is £3,378 11s. 7d.

Caning of Girls by Male Teachers.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if he will state whether it is a common practice in mixed elementary schools for girls to be caned by male teachers; whether such a practice has been prohibited as unseemly by the London School Board and other great School Boards; and whether the Board of Education are taking any steps to discourage or prohibit it in all schools.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) So far as I am aware the reply to the first paragraph is in the negative. In reply to the second paragraph, I have no official knowledge that such Boards have found it necessary to pass such a resolution. In reply to the last paragraph I have no reason to believe that any such action on the part of the Board is necessary at present or is likely to become so in the future.

Committee on Physical Deterioration—Terms of Reference.

SIR JOHN GORST: To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if he will state what are the terms of reference to the Departmental Committee now sitting on physical degeneration.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The original reference charged the Committee with a preliminary inquiry into the allegations concerning the deterioration of certain classes of the population as shown by the large percentage of rejections for physical causes of recruits for the Army and by other evidence, especially the Report of the Commission on Physical Instruction in Scotland, and to consider in what manner the medical profession can best be consulted on the subject with a view to the appointment of a Royal Commission, and the terms of reference to such a Commission, if appointed, but this reference was subsequently explained to imply the duty (1) to determine, with the aid of such counsel as the medical profession are able to give, the steps that should be taken to furnish the Government and the nation at large with periodical data for an accurate comparative estimate of the health and physique of the people; (2) to indicate generally the causes of such physical deterioration as does exist in certain classes; and (3) to point out the means by which it can be most effectually diminished.

Education—Children under Three Years of Age.

MR. MORRELL (Oxfordshire, Woodstock): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether the system still prevails under which the attendances of children under three years old are to be separately registered so as to be taken into account in calculating accommodation and also in determining the teaching staff required, but are not to be taken into account in calculating the grant; and, if so, whether he will now consider an adjustment of the grant to meet the case.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) Children under three years of age are allowed to attend school, but their attendances are not registered for any purpose. Under these circumstances the Question put in the last paragraph does not appear to arise.

Naval Manœuvres.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether there is any obligation upon admirals commanding squadrons to conduct manœuvres which provide sufficient training for the handling of fleets in war; and, if not, whether such manœuvres as will contribute to the fighting efficiency of the Fleet will be made compulsory and reports sent to the Admiralty upon the capacity or otherwise of the officers engaged in them.

(*Answered by Mr Pretyman.*) The orders issued to admirals carry the obligation named in the Question. It is well understood by all admirals in command that their first and principal duty is to make their squadrons efficient for war, and that it is for this purpose that they are appointed.

Naval Churches.

MR. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the number of churches belonging to the Admiralty in which any religious service other than that of the Church of England is at present used, and if any applications from other religious bodies have been made for the use of such churches and have been refused.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) There is no case in which a church belonging to the Admiralty is used for any religious service other than that of the Church of England. Only one application has been made for the use of a church for such services, and in that case other suitable accommodation was provided.

Underground Wires and Pipes in the Mall.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether he is aware that the wood and concrete of the new road in the Mall and the pathway between the freshly planted trees, which have only just been laid, are already being picked up to place telephone or other wires; whether he is aware that similar destruction of the road has already happened twice since September; whether he can say who is responsible for this, what is the extra cost involved, and out of what funds it is defrayed; and whether steps can be taken to lay all wires and pipes that are likely to be required for some time before the road is again reinstated.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) The cables of the Electric Supply Company for lighting the Mall, now being laid, are in positions quite clear of the main roadway between the Queen Victoria Memorial and the present termination of the wood paving near the Duke of York's Column. As originally arranged, they are passing along the footways, which were specially left unfinished in view of this work. Where the Marlborough Gate roadway joins the new Mall, the taking up of a narrow strip of wood-block paving, and the forming of a chase in the concrete is unavoidable, because the high-tension mains of the company can only be laid upon what is known as the "solid" system, and this necessitates an open iron casing for filling in bitumen. No earlier facilities to meet this contingency could have been provided, pending a settlement with the company, nor could the work have been undertaken at the same time as the roadwork without postponing the latter, as the mains on the "solid" system take a long time to prepare, and are not kept in stock. The disturbance incidental to crossing the branch roadway is reduced to a minimum, and the expense is included in the cost of the cables as agreed upon with the company. This part of the work is chargeable to the Supplementary Vote passed for the works on the Mall. The First Commissioner is not aware of any telephone wires being required. As regards the roadway around the Queen Victoria Memorial, it was necessary to cross to the centre of the ring after the roadway was laid, and, for the reasons before explained, this had to be executed upon the "solid" system. All wires and pipes likely to be required will have been laid upon the completion of the present work.

Tuberculosis Commission—Publication of an Interim Report.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state if it is the intention of the Tuberculosis Commission to issue an Interim Report; and, if so, how soon it may be expected.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I understand that the Commission do not propose to issue an Interim Report.

Repayment of Transvaal Loan.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the sum of £3,000,000 sterling advanced by way of loan to the Transvaal and Orange River Colony has been repaid to the Exchequer in terms of The South African Loan and War Contribution Act, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The answer is in the affirmative.

Mr. McCRAE: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the sum paid in addition to the £3,000,000 advanced by way of loan on account of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, and estimated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1903 at £4,000,000 sterling, has been paid to the National Debt Commissioners, and applied by them towards the discharge of any Exchequer bonds or Treasury bills falling due during the financial year ending the 31st of March, 1904, in terms of The South African Loan and War Contribution Act, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) A sum of £3,000,000 (apart from the £3,000,000 repaid to the Exchequer) has been paid to the National Debt Commissioners and applied towards the discharge of Exchequer bonds which fell due on the 7th August, 1903.

Deaths from Plague in India.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state the number of persons who died of plague in Central India and Rajputana respectively during the month of January last, and how the figures compare with the month of January, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The numbers are:—January, 1903, Central India, 92; Rajputana, 10. January, 1904, Central India, 3,721; Rajputana, 716.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state what percentage of persons inoculated with plague serum in India subsequently died of plague.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) Calculated on the figures of inoculations and deaths in the several provinces given by my predecessor in office in reply to a Question asked by the hon. Member on 11th June, 1903,† the percentage of deaths is ·24. I have no later information on the subject, but the Government of India have lately taken steps to secure a more accurate record for the future.

Manufacture at Johapore Factory of the New Army Rifles.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India, having regard to the fact that the Indian Financial Statement for 1903–4 shows that the Johapore Rifle Factory is expected to be in a position to commence the manufacture of rifles during the present year, will arrangements be made for the manufacture at that factory of some of the new Army rifles required for the troops in India.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) It is not expected that under the most favourable circumstances manufacture can commence before December next. There is therefore, little probability of any out-turn of importance during the next financial year. The supply of rifles for Indian requirements will then be carried on from the factory as far as it is able to produce them.

Adoption in Ireland of Public Libraries Act.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is now in a position to give the names of the rural district councils in Ireland which have adopted the Public Libraries Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) It has been necessary to address inquiries to 213 rural district councils, and replies have not yet been received from all. The desired information will be communicated to the hon. Member as soon as it is complete.

Redemption of Irish Quit and Crown Rents.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the amount realised since the last Return of Irish quit and Crown rents redeemed; whether he will have these funds set aside and attributed to Crown or other purposes in Ireland, and no longer, as hitherto, invested in Great Britain.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The last return extended to 31st March, 1902. The amount realised between that date and 31st March, 1903 (the latest date to which the accounts have been made up), is £17,379. The Crown Lands Act, 1829, Section 52, provides that these moneys shall be invested in the purchase of land or other hereditaments, or the redemption of charges or encumbrances on land already belonging to the Crown, and under Section 109 of that Act and certain other Crown Lands Acts sums not immediately wanted for these purposes may be invested in trustee securities. A sum of £15,636 has been invested in Bank of Ireland Stock, and other Irish investments are under consideration.

Goods Carriage in Ireland.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Great Southern and Western Railway Company are not carrying into effect their amalgamation agreements; whether he will make inquiries respecting a case of eggs handed in to be forwarded at through rates from Clonmel to Birmingham by the new route viâ Wexford and New Ross, the consignment of which was charged the high local rate to Wexford where the case was detained one day before handing it over to the Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Company; and whether he will arrange that consignors of Irish produce shall receive the facilities promised at the time of amalgamation.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) A representation in the sense referred to has been received by the Department and will be inquired into.

Return of Irish Private Bills.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will arrange to have a Return to date of Private Bills (Ireland) (Expenses) (in continuation of No. 356, of Session 1892, and (from 1892 to 1898) of No. 344, of Session 1900), to be prepared and printed for the information of the House.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxiii., 629.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) My right hon. friend has asked me to answer this Question, as the Returns to which it refers and which it is desired to continue include, not Ireland only, but the whole of the United Kingdom. The Return is a very heavy one, and it has not been usual to give it except at longer intervals than that which has elapsed since the last one was given. I will, however, communicate with the Departments on whom the work of preparing the Return chiefly falls, before coming to a decision in the matter.

Irish Land Act—Bogus New Tenancies.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what rules the Estates Commissioners have made to ensure that bogus new tenancies are not created when estates are being sold so as to prevent advances being granted to persons who are not *bonâ fide* tenants, evicted tenants, or proper cases so recognised by the Purchase Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) If a tenancy has been created since 1st January, 1901, the forms prescribed by the rules of the Estates Commissioners require the fact to be disclosed, and the inspectors are instructed in such cases to specially report whether they are of opinion that the limit of £500 advance imposed by Section 53 should be exceeded and to state their reasons, having regard to the wants and circumstances of other persons residing in the neighbourhood. For that purpose all information available in the office as to evicted tenants or otherwise is placed at their disposal.

Expenditure on Education in Ireland—Model Schools.

MR. T. M. HEALY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, is it proposed by the Treasury to continue any longer to spend on the Irish model schools, in the majority of which there is a very scanty attendance of pupils, large sums of public money; have the Government considered whether this expenditure would be better devoted to the requirements of well-attended ordinary national schools; whether many of the latter are much in need of general repair or reconstruction; whether several of the model school buildings could be at once advantageously transferred for the purposes of technical and industrial education to county councils and other local bodies; and will he inquire whether such bodies would be willing to maintain the fabrics.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Report of the recent inquiry into primary education in Ireland which has been presented to Parliament, deals at some length with the Irish model schools and contains suggestions in respect of the matters mentioned in the second part of the Question. The Report is at present engaging the consideration of Government.

Salaries of Irish Agricultural Department Officials.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will furnish a Return showing the names and official titles of the employees of the Irish Agricultural Department, respecting whom proposals for increase of salary have been made to the Treasury in connection with the Estimates for 1904–5, indicating at the same time such as are recurrent applications.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Such a Return would be wholly without precedent, and I am unable, therefore, to grant it.

Irish Police Instructors—District Inspector Hetreed.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if District Inspector Hetreed is still receiving his allowance as police instructor at the depot; and if he can say why no recruits are at present receiving instruction.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Yes, Sir. The services of this officer as police instructor are retained for the reasons mentioned in the reply to my hon. friend's previous Question of the 18th February† on the subject.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxx., 237.

Irish Land Purchase—Applications from Evicted Tenants in County Carlow.

Mr. HAMMOND (Carlow): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many applications from evicted tenants in the county of Carlow have been received by the Estates Commissioners; and what steps, if any, have been taken to make provision for them.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Forty-five. Inquiries are being made on all estates coming before the Commissioners from the county with a view to the re-instatement of evicted tenants.

Royal Irish Constabulary—Compulsory Retirement.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that several sergeants of the Royal Irish Constabulary in Belfast having over thirty years service are being compelled to retire on pension, while in the same town there are head constables and constables having the same number of years service who are being retained; and if he can explain why this compulsory retirement is not universal.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The power invested in the Inspector-General by Statute of compulsorily retiring members of the force throughout the country is exercised only in cases of inefficiency, or for some other similar reason, and not on account of length of service alone. Six sergeants of the Belfast force were thus compulsorily retired during the past three years, but, at the present time, there is no case of a sergeant in Belfast being under notice to be compulsorily retired on pension.

Audit of Accounts of Londonderry and Lough Swilly Railway Company.

Mr. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland who is the representative of the guaranteeing area that audits the accounts of the Londonderry and Lough Swilly Railway, when was the last audit made, and was the result published.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) There is no baronial audit of the Lough Swilly Company's accounts as no guarantee applies to that line, but the company works three lines, namely: the Letterkenny, the Carndonagh Extension, and the Burtonport Extension, to which guarantees do apply; and if the hon. Member will state to which of these three lines he refers, I will make further inquiry in the matter.

Distribution of Funds Accumulated under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts.

Mr. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if, under the Labourers Bill, the accumulated funds now lying to the respective credits of the counties of Antrim and Down for the purposes of the Labourers (Ireland) Acts will be redistributed amongst other counties where the Acts have to a greater extent been availed of, or if such accumulated funds will be taken from the counties named for any object.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Labourers Bill, as introduced, makes no change so far as the existing reserve is concerned, but it will prevent the accumulation of any further reserve, as the full amount of the Exchequer grant available each year will be distributed.

Billeting of Soldiers in the Border Counties.

Sir WALTER THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, looking to the inconvenience and loss sustained by hotel keepers in the border counties of Scotland, by the billeting of soldiers and horses upon them en route to and from Stobbs Camp, especially in the tourist season, he will make arrangements whereby, at all events in the summer months, cavalry on the march will carry their own transport and thus avoid the alleged grievance.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) If the troops were not billeted camping grounds would have to be hired, and this, added to the expense of transporting camp equipment, would add considerably to the cost. It is therefore held that, though the hotelkeepers may suffer some slight inconvenience, this large increase to the public charges could not be justified.

Delay in Issue of War Medals to Imperial Yeomanry.

Sir SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware of the dissatisfaction existing among members of the Imperial Yeomanry who served in the late Boer War at the delay in the issue of their medals; and whether he will take steps to expedite the delivery of the medals.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The whole of the Yeomanry rolls have been dealt with except in two cases. Of these one roll goes to Woolwich to-day and the other is being checked.

Government Compensation to South African Banks for Specie Commandeered.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government intend to recoup the Standard and other South African banks the amount of money lost to them by their following the advice of Lord Milner in refusing security for the commandeered specie.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I refer the hon. Member to my reply on the 25th February last.† The circumstance to which he refers was not lost sight of.

Chinese Labour in Rhodesia.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any correspondence has passed between him and Lord Milner or the Chartered Company in regard to the admission of Chinese indentured labour into Rhodesia; and whether, if so, it will be laid on the Table of the House before assent be given to any Ordinance permitting the introduction of the said labour; whether, before that assent be given, the House will have an opportunity to express its opinion upon the matter; and whether he can state how many British subjects are now domiciled in Rhodesia, exclusive of officials of the Chartered Company or of the railroads that have obtained their capital through that Company.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) (1.) (2.) There has been correspondence, and Papers will be laid before assent is given to the necessary notice permitting the introduction of Chinese labourers into Southern Rhodesia. (3.) This Question must be addressed to the First Lord. (4.) The European population of Southern Rhodesia according to a census taken on 31st May, 1901, was 11,032. I have no accurate figures as to the officials of the Chartered Company or of the railroads.

Chinese Labour Ordinance.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will undertake to insert a clause in the proposed Chinese Ordinance to enable any Chinese labourer to refuse, if he so wishes, being transferred to a mine where the conditions of mining are distasteful to him; whether he is aware that the temperature of the deep level mines is very high; and whether, seeing that mechanical ventilation has not been generally adopted at these mines, he will so regulate the Ordinance as to prevent a Chinese labourer working in these mines unless he consents to do so, as also in mines where the workings are wet or in any other way distasteful to the labourer.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The answer is in the negative. The provision for the consent of the labourer to transfer can be better made by regulation than by amendment of the Ordinance, and the regulation will provide that the Lieutenant-Governor shall not sanction any transfer except on the production of a certificate signed by the Government Superintendent that the agreement as to transfer has been explained to the labourer and that he consents thereto and has signed the same. The labourer will then have the opportunity of declining to be transferred to an employer whose service is distasteful to him.

Civil Rights of Chinese Labourers in the Transvaal.

MR. MARKHAM: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, under the proposed Ordinance regulating Chinese labour in the Transvaal, Chinese labourers will be given free access to the Law Courts, or whether they will be deprived of those rights which the natives in the Transvaal possess.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) Chinese labourers have the same rights of access to the Courts as all other inhabitants of His Majesty's territories.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxx., 972.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Army Contracts Department.

Mr. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what were the dates of the appointments of the Director and Assistant Director of Army Contracts.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): The Assistant Director of Contracts, Mr. Bull, was appointed on the 10th November, 1903. The Director of Contracts, Mr. de la Bere, has been officiating since 14th December. He would, under ordinary circumstances, have received the pay of such appointment from the 11th instant.

The New Rifle.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what number of improved pattern of rifle approved in 1903 are on order from Government factories and private contractors respectively; and when deliveries of the new rifle are expected to commence.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The details of orders given to private firms cannot be published. Deliveries are expected to commence early in April.

Volunteers—Conditions of Service.

Mr. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state what conditions of service the Volunteers will be under this year; and whether, under the rules of their corps, Volunteers are required to send in their resignation before 31st March, or be liable to serve another year or pay a fine.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The conditions of service will be the same as last year. The rules of the corps and dates for resignation vary so considerably that it is not possible to give any reply to the latter part of the Question.

Cost of Military Manœuvres.

***Sir CHARLES DILKE** (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what is the sum taken in all Votes combined for manœuvres in the year 1904–5, as compared with that taken in 1903–4.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The amount allotted for manœuvres (apart from ordinary field training) in 1903–4 was £130,000. The corresponding amount provided in 1904–5 is £100,000.

Militia Field Artillery.

***Sir CHARLES DILKE**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what has been the result in numbers and efficiency of the increase of Militia Field Artillery by two brigade divisions.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Only one brigade of Militia Field Artillery has been formed. The reports on this brigade have been most satisfactory and the numbers are complete.

New War Office.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, in view of the fact that the new War Office in Whitehall will accommodate a larger staff than required if effect be given to the proposed scheme of decentralisation, will he state whether the building is too far advanced to admit of the structure and internal fittings being so altered as to effect economy in its cost; and will he state the contract price, and by what date the contractors have undertaken to complete the work.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am afraid that the hon. Member is mistaken in his fact. The accommodation in the new building would have proved insufficient for properly housing the present staff which is an increase on the establishment existing when the final plans were approved. The reductions following on the scheme of decentralisation will probably still leave the building none too large for the future staff. The date for completion of the work is the 25th June, 1906.

Military Discharges—Weak-Minded Soldiers.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what provision is made for the care and maintenance of a soldier on the active list who, although in the opinion of the medical officer he is not a fit subject to be sent straight into a lunatic asylum, shows such weakness of mind that his discharge from the Army is considered expedient; is it usual in such cases to send a discharged soldier to his home in charge of a non-commissioned officer; and, if so, will he explain the reason.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: If the hon. Member will kindly refer to paragraphs 1820 and 1822 of the King's Regulations, he will find that harmless lunatic soldiers are handed over to their friends, if they are willing to receive them, or to the parish authorities if they decline. They are conducted by an unarmed party, the strength of which is determined by the local military authorities.

Presbyterian Army Chaplain in Scotland.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will explain why there is no commissioned Presbyterian chaplain at Edinburgh or at any of the military stations in Scotland.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The need of the services of the Presbyterian chaplains is more urgent at other stations at home and abroad than at those in Scotland, and these considerations govern the postings.

Ex-Lieutenant Creen, 6th Volunteer Battalion, King's Liverpool Regiment.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that Mr. Robert Creen, late Lieutenant in the 6th Volunteer Battalion (King's Liverpool Regiment), has been deprived of his commission on a charge of insubordination, consisting in his asking the commanding officer of the regiment to direct that the officers be periodically furnished with information as to, and allowed a voice in, the expenditure and management of the moneys subscribed by them to the private funds of the corps; whether he will explain why Mr. Creen was not furnished before the inquiry with information as to the charges to be brought against him, or allowed at the inquiry to call or put in evidence on his own behalf or to cross-examine the witnesses against him; and whether he proposes to take any further action in the matter.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: My hon. friend's Question has already been answered in official and semi-official correspondence to which I have nothing to add. But as he asks the Question I will repeat that a Court of Inquiry of three Volunteer commanding officers found Lieutenant Creen guilty of insubordination to his commanding officer. On the advice of the military authorities it was decided to call on Lieutenant Creen to resign; he has not done so and steps will now be taken for his removal. As regards the other points it appears that Lieutenant Creen had all the information at his disposal as to the scope of the inquiry, and that he called a witness on his behalf; the Court only refused to receive certain letters and evidence which it considered irrelevant.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR: Having regard to the fact that it is alleged that this officer has been unfairly treated, will the right hon. Gentleman lay on the Table the Report of the Court of Inquiry or other correspondence?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, Sir. I should be very unwilling to go behind the Report of a properly constituted Court on a matter of discipline.

Rosyth Naval Base—Mineral Rights.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the fact that in addition to the price of £122,500 paid for the surface of the land purchased by the Department for the Naval Base on the Firth of Forth a sum of £12,250 has been paid in name of compensation for minerals, he will state the rental of the minerals so acquired.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): These minerals have not at present been worked and there is, therefore, no rental in respect of them.

MR. BUCHANAN: Has the money been paid out of the Vote for Naval Works?

MR. PRETYMAN was understood to reply in the affirmative.

Admiralty Grants to Religious Denominations.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state what annual grants have been given by his Department to the various religious denominations respectively during the last five years.

MR. PRETYMAN: The total amount of the grants referred to has been as follows—Church of England, including Irish Church and Scotch Episcopalian, £12,278 18s. 9d.; Roman Catholic, £13,434 18s. 8d Other religious bodies, including Presbyterian, Wesleyan, Baptist and Congregational, £11,316 3s. 0d. These grants include fixed allowances, capitation allowances, and building contributions.

Lord Milner and South African Opinion.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will call Lord Milner's attention to the apparent conflict in the circumstances that, whilst on 3rd January he cabled that the opposition to the Chinese Ordinance is now confined to a small minority among Boer and British even in the Cape, and on 28th January that local opposition is now apparently extinct, a Blue-book is issued on 3rd March covering the period from 13th January to 1st March containing many protests and a petition to the King from meetings of the inhabitants of South African towns against the Ordinance.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): The hon. Member will find the latest expression of Lord Milner's opinion on this subject at page 14 of Cd. 1941. It is dated the 25th January and is consequently more recent than any of the petitions referred to by the hon. Member, except one. The hon. Member will also notice that all the petitions and resolutions from the Transvaal, with one single exception, are in favour of Asiatic labour. In these circumstances I see no reason for calling Lord Milner's attention to the matter.

DR. MACNAMARA: It would appear that on other occasions Lord Milner has seriously misunderstood South African opinion.

Chinese Labour—Capitation Fees.

MR. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe): On behalf of the hon. Member for the Otley District of Yorkshire, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he is now in a position to state whether any payment for licence for recruiting or *per capita* on each labourer received will be made to the Chinese Government, or to any Chinese official, by an importer of labourers into South Africa.

MR. LYTTELTON: I regret that I cannot at present make any statement.

Asiatic Labour in Southern Rhodesia.

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether there has been any importation of Asiatic labour into Southern Rhodesia under the Ordinance of 1902, set out in Paper Cd. 1200 of that year: and, if so, to what extent; whether any condition was imposed that the Ordinance should not apply to the importation of Chinese labour, and should, with regard to other labour, only become operative after sanction of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and what action was taken by the Secretary of State; whether he can see his way to lay upon the Table a continuation of the Correspondence relating to the supply of labour in Rhodesia, Cd. 1200 of 1902; and whether sanction to the proposed Ordinance with regard to imported labour for the Transvaal will be withheld until the Rhodesian Papers have been laid.

MR. LYTTELTON: (1.) The answer is in the negative. (2.) I have to refer the hon. Member to a letter at page 74 of Cd. 1200 in which the British South Africa Company were informed by Mr. Chamberlain on 26th June, 1901, that any scheme for introducing Chinese labour must be considered separately, and after it has been fully discussed locally. The sanction of the Secretary of State is required under the Ordinance No. 3 of 1902 but has not been given as yet. (3.) The correspondence is not sufficiently complete to be laid upon the Table at present, but I expect to be able to do so at an early date. (4.) I am not prepared to give the pledge asked for.

Mr. MARKHAM: Will the right hon. Gentleman in this case take a vote of the Colonists?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: Order, order! Notice must be given of that.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): Will the Papers be laid before the right hon. Gentleman arrives at a final decision?

Mr. LYTTELTON: I have answered that.

Mr. MARKHAM: Will you answer my Question?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: It is not in order.

Importation of Asiatics into Rhodesia.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he proposes at an early date to authorise the importation of Asiatic labourers into Rhodesia under the provisions of the Ordinances already sanctioned.

Mr. LYTTELTON: I am not prepared at present to make a definite statement on this matter, which is under consideration.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has declined to sanction the importation of Chinese labourers into Rhodesia under any Ordinance or Ordinances.

Mr. LYTTELTON: I have not as yet felt justified in assenting to the issue of the notice which, under the Ordinance No. 3, of 1902, is a condition precedent to the importation of Chinese labourers. The whole matter is receiving my careful consideration.

Mr. MARKHAM: Will the right hon. Gentleman decline to sanction the Ordinance until the people of the Colonies have been consulted?

Dr. MACNAMARA: Shall we have an opportunity of seeing and debating the Ordinance before sanction is given to it?

[No answer was returned.]

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax): Does the Ordinance differ from the Transvaal Ordinance?

Mr. LYTTELTON: Yes, Sir.

Claim against the Chartered Company for Injuries caused by Jameson Raid.

Sir BRAMPTON GURDON: (Norfolk, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether His Majesty's Government, as legal successors to the assets of the late South African Republic, will take immediate steps to enforce payment of the indemnity which the Chartered Company of British South Africa undertook to pay on the release of the prisoners after the Jameson Raid, with interest for the last seven years; and will apply the same towards the expense of the late war.

Mr. LYTTELTON: I have to refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the House to a similar Question on 1st April, 1901†, by my predecessor.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal S.): Is it a fact that the late Colonial Secretary, in a despatch to Lord Rosmead in April, 1897, stated that the Chartered Company should be compelled to make good all compensation paid for injuries caused by the raid.

Mr. LYTTELTON: I have not had time to look up the documents. I must ask for longer notice.

South African Gold Mining Companies.

Mr. MANSFIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will grant a Return showing the names of the various companies interested in gold mining in South Africa, the capital of those companies, and the amount of dividends paid for each year during the last five years, together with the number of persons employed, showing separately the number of British, foreign, and native persons employed.

Mr. LYTTELTON: I have not in my possession the information necessary for the preparation of such a Return, much of which is not of a nature to come before Government. It would probably be impossible to collect now all the information asked for in the last part of the Question. I am not, therefore, prepared to grant the Return.

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† See (4) *Debates*, xcii., 329.

Electoral Rolls for South Africa.

COLONEL DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if it be his intention to give instructions for the formation of an electoral roll for municipal and parliamentary franchise in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony.

MR. LYTTELTON: Municipal rolls already exist. In my opinion the time has not yet arrived for incurring the cost of preparing an electoral roll for parliamentary franchise.

Australian Labour Laws.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will represent to the Australian Government the propriety of repealing the legislation which prohibits British workers from landing in Australia under contracts to perform manual labour.

MR. LYTTELTON: No, Sir. I cannot undertake to make the representation suggested.

Tibet Mission.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state whether any difficulties have arisen in connection with the mission to Tibet to necessitate an addition to the military escort; and, if so, will he state the nature of the difficulties, and to what extent the escort is to be strengthened.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I have heard nothing of any difficulties necessitating an addition to the military escort with the Tibet mission.

Crete.

MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government will now communicate to the House the Reports of His Royal Highness the High Commissioner of Crete upon the administration of that island during the years 1900, 1901, 1902, and 1903.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): No such Reports have been received from the High Commissioner.

Russia and the Armenians.

MR. STEVENSON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg has been or will be desired to use his good offices with the Russian Government for the purpose of preventing the confiscation of the funds contributed by British Armenian subjects in Madras, Calcutta, Bombay, and elsewhere, for the support of the Theological Seminary at Etchmiadzin and for educational objects amongst necessitous Armenian congregations in Russia, under the spiritual direction of the See of Etchmiadzin.

EARL PERCY: His Majesty's Government understand that under a law promulgated in June of last year, the Russian Government assumed the administration of Armenian Church property and revenues in the Caucasus, including those vested in the schools. The question is one of internal administration with which His Majesty's Government have no concern.

English Immigrants at Boston.

MR. THEODORE TAYLOR: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Otley Division of Yorkshire, I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he is aware that a party of eight persons who went out from Yorkshire in September last in the steamship "Commonwealth" were not allowed to land at Boston, but were sent back to this country, though they were met by friends who were prepared to be responsible for them, and though they had not gone out under any contract; and, if so, will he make representations to the Government of the United States in regard to this occurrence.

EARL PERCY: The only information we have of the circumstances mentioned by the hon. Member is contained in a telegram just received from the Acting British Consul at Boston, who states on the authority of the Immigration Commissioner there that the persons referred to were deported as likely to become a charge to the public, and that this decision was taken after thorough investigation and an appeal to the Department at Washington. We expect to receive in due course a full report of the circumstances of the case.

Examination for the Consular Service.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will say what are the general principles of political economy applicable to commerce recommended by the Committee recently appointed to inquire into the constitution of the Consular service as a compulsory subject of examination for those desiring to enter the service, and approved by the Secretary of State.

EARL PERCY: I am not aware that the Committee attempted any definition of the general principles of political economy. The course of study to be prescribed for the examination has not yet been finally decided, but there appears to be no reason why it should exclude as inapplicable to commerce any of the general principles of economic science.

Sugar Duties—Polariscopic Scale.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, seeing that sugar refineries have been placed in bond and that duty is actually paid on the quantity of sugar refined as it is delivered from the factories, he can see his way to abolish the method of collecting the sugar tax in accordance with the polariscopic scale imposed in the Budget of 1901.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The scale of sugar duties imposed by the Finance Act, 1901, is applicable to sugars delivered from British refineries as well as to sugars which are imported and cleared for home consumption without passing through a refinery in this country. All sugar delivered from a refinery is not assessable at the highest rate of 4s. 2d. the cwt. as the Question seems to imply, but considerable quantities are delivered at the various lower rates in the scale referred to. I am not prepared to propose any alteration in the existing system of collection.

Somerset House—Estate and Legacy Department.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware of considerable delays in the Estate and Legacy Department of Somerset House; and whether he will take steps to remove impediments by adverting to the former practice of personal attendance, or some other method calculated to expedite the transaction of business.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): There have been some delays in the Estate Duty Department since the 1st January, 1904, owing to extension of the office premises and to changes in the distribution of the staff consequent on such extension and on modifications of the methods of transacting business. Every effort is, however, being made to minimise delay whether attributable to these or any other causes, and the Board of Inland Revenue are confident that all ground of complaint will shortly be removed.

Irish Food Imports and Exports.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, having regard to the quantity of food exported from Ireland, and to the fact that food forms the largest part of the imports into Great Britain, and in view of the desirability of making the returns of these imports complete and accurate, especially with regard to butter, meat, eggs, and poultry, he would undertake to separate in future editions of the Statistical Abstract and other returns of figures the exports and imports of Ireland from those of Great Britain.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The direct exports from and imports into Irish ports to and from countries abroad are already shown under each port in the second volume of the Annual Statement of Trade. These exports and imports, however, represent only a part of the trade carried on at such ports, the remaining portion of which consists chiefly of movements of goods from and to Great Britain. The Customs have no machinery for taking an account of the quantities or values of such goods, and particulars of them cannot, therefore, be given.

Whisky Adulteration in Bond.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the quantity of raw grain whisky which has been used for mixing with malt whisky in Government warehouses under the supervision of revenue officials during the year ending 31st December, 1903.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have no means of obtaining the information desired by the hon. Member.

MR. WEIR: Does the right hon. Gentleman know that the revenue officials stand by and allow this process of mixing raw grain spirit with malt spirit to be carried on in Government warehouses, and will he have some inquiry made with a view to stopping it?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Gentleman is now asking a different Question from that on the Paper, and one which I have already answered in the course of the present session.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman cause inquiry to be made, because if information in connection with frauds is given by an Excise official he is immediately dismissed from the service?

*MR. SPEAKER: That is covered by the answer given.

Director of Army Contracts—Official Appointment.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Lords of the Treasury have sanctioned the appointment of Mr. Henry de la Bere as Director of Army Contracts; whether the announcement of that gentleman's appointment was made by the Secretary of State for War with the concurrence of their Lordships; and whether Mr. Alfred Major had resigned the office of Director of Contracts when the appointment of Mr. de la Bere was officially announced.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The matters referred to concern the War Department only. Treasury sanction was needed neither for the appointment nor for the announcement.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: But the Treasury should know. They have to provide the salaries. I will, however, address it to the Secretary for War later. [The opportunity, however, did not recur as the time for Questions had lapsed before this one could be put a second time.]

Argentine Sugar Exports.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, seeing that the imports of sugar from the Argentine Republic in 1901 were 666,344, in 1902 808,951, and in eight months of 1903 418,386 cwts., and that since the 1st September, 1903, this trade has been altogether prohibited under the Sugar Convention Act, he can say to what country this sugar has been diverted, and what effects, if any, its diversion has produced on exports to the Argentine Republic or other places.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The quarterly Trade Accounts of the Argentine Government show that n the last quarter of 1903 the export of sugar from the Argentine amounted to 2,586 tons, of which 2,571 tons went to Uruguay. In the corresponding period of 1902 the exports amounted to 14,575 tons, of which 11,335 came to the United Kingdom and 3,180 went to Uruguay. These figures would seem to indicate that the prohibition has so far stopped rather than diverted the trade.

MR. LOUGH: Cannot the right hon. Gentleman answer the last paragraph of the Question?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir, it is quite impossible to tell the effects in so short a period.

Board of Trade and Railway Management.

MR. BELL (Derby): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will say what, if anything, is being done to ensure the adoption of the rules made by the Board of Trade; and whether he is making any arrangements for testing either-side brakes on waggons as desired by the Railway and Canal Commissioners in July of last year.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The first part of this inquiry hardly lends itself to reply within the limits of an Answer to a Question in the House. The following general statement will, however, serve to indicate the nature of the steps taken by the Board. The Board have addressed letters of inquiry to the several railway companies as to the action taken by them to carry out the rules dealing with (1) propping and tow-roping, (2) the lighting of stations and sidings, and (3) the protection of permanent-way men. The replies received have been examined by the Board's technical officers, to whom also have been submitted such complaints as have been received from time to time of alleged infractions of the rules. Upon the advice of their officers the Board have, in numerous cases, ordered inspections to be made under Section 13 (1) of the Railway Employment (Prevention of Accidents) Act. Such inspections have been ordered and are in course of being carried out at thirty-six of the places where railway companies have represented that, in their opinion, the operations of propping or tow-roping must be continued for the present. It is satisfactory to note that propping has now, for the most part, been discontinued, and that at numerous places railway companies have provided cross-over roads, so as to avoid the necessity of tow-roping. Inspections in regard to alleged insufficiency of lighting at places falling within the rule on the subject have been, or are about to be made, in eighty-three cases, and I am glad to say that where the Board's officers have considered further lighting to be needed, the companies generally have agreed to carry out their recommendations. As further rules become operative, I propose, in the first instance, to make inquiry as to the steps taken by the companies to comply with them. There has been some difficulty in making arrangements for the tests of either-side brakes to which the hon. Member refers. I understand, however, that the tests will be made early next month.

Mr. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): Is it not the fact that the difficulty in testing the either-side brakes has been caused by the Board of Trade itself?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I have no reason to suppose that to be the case.

Passive Resistance at Norden.

Mr. MANSFIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the action of the assistant overseer of Norden, Lancashire, in refusing to apply for a summons against the Rev. J. T. Wilkins, Congregational Minister of Tenterfield, Norden, and in threatening to strike him off the voters list; and, if so, will he state whether the assistant overseer is acting in accordance with his instructions; and, if not, will he take steps to see that the usual instructions to overseers in these matters are carried out.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.): I have no information as to the case referred to, nor have I given any instructions with regard to it. It rests with the overseers to determine whether they will enforce payment of any sum which may be due from Mr. Wilkins in respect of poor rate, and I cannot undertake to interfere in the matter.

Education Act Orders.

Mr. STEVENSON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether Orders are sealed by the Charity Commissioners, under the Board of Education Act, 1899, in cases in which there is a dispute as to the nature and meaning of the trusts, or as to the apportionment previously made; whether, in such cases the sealing of an Order under the Board of Education Act, 1899, renders inoperative any remedies to which aggrieved persons or public bodies might otherwise have recourse under the Charitable Trusts Acts; and whether, if that be so, he will consider the desirability of taking such steps as may be necessary, by legislation or otherwise, to secure that the existing remedies shall not be lost.

Mr. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): May I be allowed to answer this Question? No Order for determining, under the Board of Education Act, 1899, what part of a charity is educational is ever made by the Charity Commissioners without full consideration of the nature and meaning of the trusts, including the effect of any previous apportionment; but, after consideration, it is their duty to issue such Orders, even in cases where their decisions may be disputed. Where an apportionment Order has previously been made, and no appeal was presented within the statutory period of three months, it has become binding on all parties, including the Commissioners themselves; it is therefore not the fact that the effect of a Determination Order following the previous apportionment is to render inoperative in such cases any remedy otherwise available by those who may raise objections to the apportionment.

Sea Fisheries Bill.

MR. STEVENSON: I beg to ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, in view of the anxiety felt in some parts of the country with regard to the nature of the proposal for amending the law relating to sea fisheries mentioned in the King's Speech, he will state in general terms what is the object of the proposed Bill, and when it is likely to be introduced.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): The Bill to which the hon. Member refers was introduced in the House of Lords by my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries on the 2nd February. It was read a second time on the 16th ult. and referred to a Select Committee, which is now taking evidence on the subject.

Motor-car Services in County Clare.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the districts in the county Clare which have been inspected, with a view to the establishment of motor-car services.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): There were two routes inspected in Clare, namely, between Ennis and Scariff, and Ballyvaughan and Ennistymon.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.) asked who was responsible for the selection of the services?

MR. WYNDHAM said he would supply the name to the hon. Member.

Natural History Museum, Dublin.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether a decision has been arrived at with respect to the increase of the staff at the Natural History Museum in Dublin; and, if not, will the necessary steps be taken so that provision may be made before the Irish Estimates are presented.

MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir; I have nothing to add, at present, to my reply to the hon. Member's previous Question of the 29th February.†

Proposed School at Waterville.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the inspector sent down to Waterville, county Kerry, to inquire into the erection of the proposed new school there did not ascertain the opinion of Father O'Reilly, the parish priest, before submitting his report; is he aware that, owing to the distance of the village from the school at Spunkane, a number of Roman Catholic parents have had to provide teaching for thirty-four children in an apartment of the Courthouse, measuring fourteen feet by twelve feet; and whether, in view of the fact that many other Roman Catholic children, whose parents are unable to pay the private teacher employed, are absolutely debarred from education, and that the enlargement of the Spunkane school would not meet the necessities of the case, will steps be taken to avail of the site which has been secured in Waterville?

MR. WYNDHAM: Two Inspectors reported on the application for this building grant. One had an interview with the reverend gentleman. A private school for Roman Catholic children of the better class, who are charged 5s. a month, has been in operation in Waterville for some time past. The National School at Spunkane is only a mile distant from Waterville, and the Commissioners adhere to the opinion that its enlargement will effectively meet the requirements of the district.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxx., 1242.

MR. BOLAND: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the population of this place has largely extended and that the present school is a mile and a half away from where it is most needed. Will he suggest to the Education Commissioners the desirability of building a new school?

MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir, the sums involved in building schools are so large that I do not think I can do that.

Land Puchase in Wicklow.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a county Wicklow landlord has applied to the Estates Commissioners to define as an estate for the purposes of the Land Purchase Act, 1903, that part of the landlord's property which is occupied by tenants willing to buy on the landlord's terms, and to exclude from the estate a number of holdings in possession of tenants who refuse to agree to the landlord's price; and, if so, will he state what has been the decision of the Estates Commissioners.

MR. WYNDHAM: No such application has been made to the Commissioners.

Excessive Purchase Prices for Irish Land.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Estates Commissioners have refused to sanction a sale of holdings to their occupiers, who proposed to buy within the zones, on the ground that the price agreed upon was excessive; and, if so, will he say why this refusal was made.

MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir; there is obviously no foundation for the suggestion in the Question.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: I may inform the right hon. Gentleman that the reason I put the Question was that a statement was made in a Dublin paper to the effect that the Estates Commissioners would take care that no tenant would be allowed by them to purchase his holding at a usurious price even though he was buying within the zones. That statement was calculated to mislead the tenants, the Commissioners having no power to withhold their sanction from sales made within the zone limits.

Liscannor Harbour.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say when will Liscannor Harbour works be commenced; will the county council or Board of Works carry out the work; what plans have been adopted, and will they be submitted to the county council; and will the tenders for the work be public or private; and what is the exact amount of the grant to be given under the Marine Works Act.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Treasury have sanctioned an advance under the Act for the works of improvement at Liscannor. The expenditure contemplated is £8,500, a third of which will be provided by the Department of Agriculture and the balance out of the Marine Works Grant. Public tenders will be called for forthwith, and the works will be commenced as quickly as possible. They will be carried out by contract under the supervision of the Board of Works. It is not proposed to submit the plans to the county council. They provide for the construction of two new berths, an extension of the existing groyne, the deepening of the harbour, and certain other repairs and works.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Is it not the fact that the county council have decided to give a guarantee?

MR. WYNDHAM: I believe so.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Then they ought to see the plans.

Kiladysert Creek.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will consider the request of the Kiladysert District Council that the Kiladysert Creek should be improved and rendered navigable; and whether, as this matter has been pressed on the attention of the Government many times, he will see that something practical is now done to meet the difficulty complained of.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have referred the hon. Member's Question to the Department of Agriculture for consideration.

Convict Cournane.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the case of Mr. Patrick Cournane, at present in Maryborough Prison, who has served sixteen years penal servitude for an agrarian crime, has been considered with a view to his release.

MR. WYNDHAM: The prisoner is undergoing a commuted death sentence. His case was before the Lord-Lieutenant in December, when it was decided that there are no sufficient grounds at present for a remission of the sentence.

MR. FLAVIN: Does the right hon. Gentleman not consider that sixteen years penal servitude is long enough?

Irish National School Books.

MR. CONDON (Tipperary, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the rules regulating the supply of books to pupils in Irish National schools compel teachers to send for supplies, through the Commissioners, to the various booksellers from whom they may have to order school requisites; whether he is aware that in the case of small orders they are compelled to send from 10 to 25 per cent. more than cost price, though the books so purchased must afterwards be sold at cost price, and, seeing that there are local agents for the various firms of booksellers from whom those supplies could be got at cost price with no inconvenience or expense to the teacher, whether permission will be given to the teachers to purchase their school supplies from the local agents.

MR. WYNDHAM: In the case of very small orders some of the contractors charge a small percentage to cover cost of carriage or postage. If a manager desires to purchase these small quantities locally the matter will be considered by the Commissioners.

Clare Fisheries.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of his reply to a Question in 1901† that the Department of Agriculture in Ireland was considering the question of the fisheries in the district of Ballyvaughan, Clare, with a view to their development, he can now say if anything in this direction has been done or is about to be done.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Department is in correspondence with the county council on the subject of the provision of landing facilities for the fishermen at Ballaghaline. It has offered to make a contribution towards the cost of the necessary works. The council has not yet accepted the offer.

Irish Board of Agriculture Staff.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will grant a Return, in continuation of the Return moved for by the hon. Member for West Cavan in last session, showing the complete staffing of the Board of Agriculture and Technical Instruction in all its departments up to the 31st of the present month.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Return in question, which was only circulated last month, is brought down to the 1st May, 1903. There are several objections to the multiplication of Returns of this character at such short intervals, and I am reluctant to impose another on the Department at the present moment unless the hon. Member can satisfy me that he has good reasons for desiring the information. Perhaps he will communicate with me on the subject.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: Cannot the right hon. Gentleman give a Supplementary Return. The present one is six months old, it took so long to prepare.

MR. WYNDHAM: Perhaps the hon. Member will communicate with me.

Ballyshannon Demand for Seed Potatoes.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, at the instance of the Ballyshannon Board of Guardians, the Congested Districts Board had made representations to the Local Government Board with reference to the necessity of the import of seed potatoes into the district, having regard to the need of the locality for such import, and that the Local Government Board refused to entertain the application; and, if so, whether any, and, if so, what, steps will be taken by requesting the Local Government Board to reconsider their decision, or otherwise to secure for this district the import of seed potatoes which is essential to the sustenance of its inhabitants.

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† See (4) *Debates*, xcv., 564.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I must refer to my reply to the Question put to me on the 3rd February by the hon. Member for North Roscommon†.

Beekeeping in Ireland.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland has been directed to reports from experts and from their inspectors upon the prevalence of foul brood, and the need for compulsory powers for dealing with the disease; and whether, seeing that the subject of the need for compulsory powers in the treatment of foul brood in Ireland has been before the Department since 1901, when the Irish Beekeepers Association submitted statements thereon to the Vice-President, the Department will now take steps to promote legislation to meet the case.

Mr. WYNDHAM: This matter was dealt with in the reply given on the 8th February to a Question of the hon. Member for South Kerry‡.

Athenry Police Case.

Mr. DUFFY (Galway, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the proceedings at the last petty sessions held at Athenry, when a bailiff named J. Hansberry was prosecuted and fined for discharging firearms on the public road between nine and ten o'clock at night; whether he is aware that Hansberry lives about 100 yards from the public road in the neighbourhood of which several malicious injuries have taken place, and that at the last quarter session at Gort, Hansberry claimed compensation under the Malicious Injuries Act, and, if so, will he say what was the nature of his claim; can he state the number of times these outrages were reported to the police; whether they were recorded as agrarian outrages in the Return supplied to Parliament; and what action the authorities intend to take in the matter, and whether they will consider the propriety of depriving Hansberry of the licence to carry arms.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I stated yesterday† that Hansberry was prosecuted and fined on the charge of discharging firearms on the public road. He was awarded £5 compensation at quarter sessions in January for malicious injury to a pony trap at Athenry several miles distant. This case was not recorded as agrarian. There were two other cases of malicious injury in the neighbourhood for which compensation was granted; both of these were recorded as agrarian offences. Hansberry is reported by the police to be a man of good character and there are no sufficient grounds for depriving him of his arms licence.

Mr. ROCHE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the police sergeant swore that frequent complaints had been made about shots being fired at night?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: Notice must be given of any further Question.

Land Purchase in Galway.

Mr. ROCHE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the action of G. K. Mahen, a county Galway landlord, who, in selling his grass lands to small farmers at prices of from £400 to £500, involving a rental of from 30s. to £2 per acre in future on these tenants, is at the same time reserving the best portion of these lands for his own use; and, if so, whether he will direct the Estates Commissioners in the interests of the purchasing tenants and of the taxpayers, to have these holdings inspected before the advances are sanctioned.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix., 192.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxxix., 595.

† See page 583.

MR. WYNDHAM: The untenanted land proposed to be sold will provide twenty-seven new holdings. The average amount of the annuities will be 20s. 3d. per statute acre. An inspection will, of course, be made before the Commissioners sanction an advance.

MR. ROCHE: Who has the power of dividing the land into holdings?

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member had better put that Question down.

Granard Workhouse Master's Pension.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the reason of the delay on the part of the Local Government Board for Ireland in sanctioning the pension granted by the guardians of Granard union to their late master, Mr. O'Beirne; whether he is aware that all the requirements of the Local Government Board and Major Fair as to medical certificates have been complied with by the guardians; and will he now direct that the amount be forthwith sanctioned.

MR. WYNDHAM: There is no delay on the part of the Board. It awaits information already called for from the guardians, and until this has been supplied the further consideration of the case cannot proceed.

Irish Language in Irish Courts.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the correspondence which passed between Mr. M'Donogh Mahony, of Cahirciveen, and the Lord Chancellor of Ireland regarding the former's dismissal for signing warrants in Irish.

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir, the correspondence will be laid upon the Table.

Herbert Estate, Kerry.

MR. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a small number of tenants on the Herbert Estate were prevented from purchasing when the estate was sold a few years ago, and that the present holder of this portion of the estate has recently forced these tenants to pay the hanging gale's rent; and whether, having regard to this treatment and other circumstances, he will insert provisions in the amending Land Bill enabling such tenants to purchase their holdings.

MR. WYNDHAM: I understand that when the estate was sold a portion, comprising a small number of tenancies, was reserved from sale by the landlord. Unless the latter agrees to a sale he cannot be coerced into selling.

Sunday Letter Deliveries in North Kerry.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that applications have been made for a Sunday delivery of letters at Ballyduff (North Kerry) and that all the adjoining towns and villages are in the enjoyment of Sunday delivery of mails; and whether he will cause local inquiries to be made as to the alleged grievances in connection with the want of a Sunday delivery of letters.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The question of affording a Sunday delivery of letters at Ballyduff has, as the hon. Member is aware, been considered on several previous occasions, but owing to the high cost of the existing service it has not been practicable to afford the desired improvement. I shall, however, have pleasure in making further inquiry on that point in order to ascertain whether the present circumstances will admit of a compliance with the hon. Member's wishes. The result shall be communicated to him as soon as possible.

Longford Postmen's Grievance.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the limited mail delivery of letters at Longford Station at 9.13 a.m. and 5.5 p.m. is usually a heavy mail; and that the hand-cart on which the postmen are invited to drag the bags to the station is over 6 cwt. in weight; and, if so, whether he will direct that these two mail deliveries be included in the new contract just entered into.

LORD STANLEY: I am having inquiry made, and will communicate with the hon. Member.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I will repeat the Question in a week's time.

Asdee Postal Arrangements.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will make local inquiries as to the necessity of a Sunday delivery of letters at Asdee, North Kerry, in view of the inconvenience caused in the district by the fact that all letters addressed at Asdee have to lie at the adjoining post office at Ballylongford from Saturday morning until the following Monday owing to the want of a Sunday connection between Ballylongford and Asdee; and whether he will favourably consider the request of the people of the Asdee district for a Sunday mail service.

LORD STANLEY: I have directed inquiries to be made on the subject of affording a Sunday delivery of letters at Asdee, North Kerry, and will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

The War Office (Reconstruction) Report.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will now state the name of the member of the Government who sent the official communication to *The Times* newspaper that the King had been pleased to approve of the issue of the second part of the War Office (Reconstruction) Committee Report; and whether that communication was made by this member of the Government as a Departmental act or with the approval and sanction of the Cabinet in its collective capacity.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The hon. Member is labouring under a mistake. The War Office Committee was, in the first instance, appointed with the King's approval. The first part of the Report was published on 1st February with the announcement, "The King has been pleased to approve of the issue of the Report of the War Office Committee," etc. The second part was issued in exactly the same form, except that, as I am given to understand, one of the Press agencies failed to put in their copy the official notification. The proceedings were perfectly regular, and the King's approval was notified in *The Times*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily Chronicle*, *Morning Post*, and other papers.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Was it the War Secretary who sent out the Report?

[No answer was returned.]

MR SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will state why was the introductory sentence that the King has been pleased to approve of the issue of Part II. of the Report of the War Office Reconstruction Committee supplied officially with that Report to some of the organs of the Press, and withheld from other organs of the Press; and what explanation, if any, is there for withholding the notification of the King's approval from any section of the Press, and on what principle was this difference of treatment based.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already replied to the Question.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I did not understand the reply.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What part of my answer surpasses the hon. Member's comprehension?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I want to know why was the official notification of the King's approval of the issue of this War Committee's Report given to one section of the Press—*The Times*—and withheld from another section.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman is wrong both in the facts which he states, and the facts he omits. *The Times* was not the only paper to which it was given. All the papers which did not receive it failed to receive it because their agents did not appear and get the ordinary official notification.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: How was it that these papers got all the official reports except that which had the imprimatur of the King's approval, which was given to the right hon. Gentleman's own Press.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It was not given to one section. I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman regards the *Daily Chronicle* as an ardent supporter of the Government. That paper got the report.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: *The Times* and the *Daily Telegraph* got it.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: Did the *Standard* get it?

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: No, they did not.

Trinity College, Dublin—Provost's Appointment.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether an appointment has yet been made to the post of Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, which has now for a considerable time been vacant; if the appointment has been made, why has there been no official announcement of the fact; and, if the appointment has not been made, what is the reason of the delay.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No appointment has yet been made. There has been delay, though no longer than has often taken place with regard to appointments of similar importance.

Government Fiscal Policy.

Mr. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government to impose import duties of a retaliatory character without the authority of the House to each individual duty being first obtained.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It is not proposed to deal with the question of retaliation or of fiscal reform during the currency of the present Parliament, and I do not suppose the hon. Member would want to put a Question to me as to what is to take place in the next Parliament. Without, therefore, answering the Question, I may give him this consolatory information for what it is worth, that I do not think the House will ever part with its effective control over the taxation of the country.

Mr. BLACK: Will the right hon. Gentleman say by what means he proposes to confer on the Executive——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. You cannot debate this. The hon. Member is in the habit of thinking that every Question requires a supplementary Question.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us what the business will be next week?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said the Vote on Account would be taken on Monday. In accordance with a very convenient practice which had been established for some years, he had endeavoured to make himself acquainted with the subject which the Opposition, as a whole, most desired to discuss, and he gathered that that subject was education. The Education Vote would be the Vote put down first accordingly. The Report would be taken on Wednesday afternoon, which would give an opportunity for the discussion of any other subject. On Tuesday Report of the Supplementary Estimates would be taken, and on Thursday Report of Supply, Army and Navy.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said the arrangement did not meet the convenience of the Irish Party, who had not been consulted. It was not right, therefore, to say that the convenience of the Opposition, as a whole, had been consulted.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said he should have thought the hon. and learned Gentleman could have better attained his wishes by negotiation with other fractions of the Opposition than by any aid he could give. It ought to be easy to arrange for the discussion upon the Vote on Account and another subject in which the hon. Member was interested at the Evening Sitting on Monday, or the Afternoon Sitting on Wednesday, and if he could assist such an arrangement he would do so.

* SIR BRAMPTON GURDON asked whether an opportunity would be given of discussing the Vote on Account as a Vote on Account. Hon. Members might consider the instalments too large, or there might be some service in respect of which the House might deem it wise not to sanction a Vote on Account.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR replied that the hon. Member had better arrange with the authorities of the Party to which he belonged. Only a certain amount of time could, by the Rules of the House, be given to the Vote on Account, and he had always desired that the distribution of the time should be left to those who were the natural critics of the Government.

COLONEL DENNY: When will the Scotch Education Bill be introduced ?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope on an early day. I cannot say definitely.

NEW BILLS.

CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION ACT (1896) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1896," presented by Mr. Bell; supported by Mr. Levy, Mr. Shackleton, and Mr. Crooks; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th April, and to be printed. [Bill 122.]

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.

"To amend The Workmen's Compensation Act, 1897," presented by Mr. Bell; supported by Mr. Joseph Walton, Mr. Burt, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Tennant, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Emmott, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. Thomas Bayley, and Mr. Fenwick; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 123.]

VAGRANCY BILL.

"To amend The Vagrancy Act, 1824, and to facilitate the establishment of Labour Colonies," presented by Sir John Gorst; supported by Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Mr. Haldane, Sir Albert Rollit, Sir Frederick Carne Rasch, Sir John Leng, Colonel Williams, Captain Balfour, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Shackleton, and Mr. Crooks; to be read a second time upon Monday, 21st March, and to be printed. [Bill 124.]

SUPPLY [2ND ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1904-5.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 227,000, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

* SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the Motion for the reduction in the number of men, moved by his hon. friend on the previous day, had lapsed under the forms of the House, and it was his intention to conclude by moving the same reduction again, although, for reasons he would give, he would have been willing to move a much larger reduction. The grounds advanced for the Motion on the preceding day applied especially to the Somaliland campaign, and were so fully stated, that he need not repeat them. He differed from his hon. friend who thought that the Secretary for War showed himself an optimist on that subject. Anything less cheerful than the remarks the right hon. Gentleman applied to it he never heard. On an earlier day in the session they had a little debate as to how far this campaign resembled the Dutch War in what was commonly called Acheen, which had been going on ever since 1874. That comparison was not of a pleasant nature. In that day's papers, too, they had news of further fighting in Somaliland. He agreed with his hon. friend that it was an unexampled fact that men should be asked for for the Somaliland War without the money for the continuing expenditure; the money should appear on the Estimates, or should be the subject of a Vote of Credit. The Secretary for War had made a somewhat startling announcement. He had told them he would have to make a proposal for a money Vote unless certain events occurred, events which he did not specify. Did that mean they were putting a price on the Mullah's head ? That policy had been pursued by English generals in the Soudan, and had been

repudiated by the authorities at home, or were the Government anticipating the conclusion of peace with the Mullah so as to avoid the necessity for the expenditure of a further large sum? It was perfectly true that it was not usual to have the costs of a war put upon the Estimates, and the case of the South African War was exceptional, but the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had omitted to explain that the reason why the costs of a war were not borne upon the Estimates, was that they were provided for by Votes of Credit, but these small wars had constantly been borne upon the Estimates, and the Somaliland campagn had unfortunately appeared upon the Estimates for some years past. One of two things should have been done by the Government, either they should have put upon the Estimates a sum based upon the calculation of the monthly expenditure in Somaliland or, if that was not possible, they should have taken a Vote of Credit.

Coming to the more important question of the reduction of 10,000 men which had been moved, he personally would have preferred the larger reduction which stood in the name of the hon. Member for Plymouth, but whatever reduction was moved it became most important, owing to the language used by the Prime Minister in the debate on the previous day, for the Committee to pursue on these Estimates the policy which they had pursued in the past. The right hon. Gentleman had promised a statement to be made later in the session, a statement which no doubt if the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had his way would be satisfactory to the Army reformers in the House, but that statement was to be made at an indefinite date, and the Prime Minister had accompanied his suggestion with language which threw some doubt on certain portions of the Report which had been laid before them and which was the main ground on which this reduction had been moved. The Prime Minister had thrown over speeches which he had made in the past on these Army Estimates, and while the Secretary of State for War told the Committee that he entertained the same opinion which had been expressed in Committee in previous years in condemnation of the Army proposals made two years ago, the Prime Minister had gone out of his way to throw considerable doubt upon what the Government were going to adopt of the Report. The Report of Lord Esher's Committee censured a great deal of the system adopted by the late Secretary of State for War, and when the Prime Minister came to deal with that question he did not use language calculated to satisfy the House that they were right in dismissing those proposals. It should be remembered that when those proposals were put forward a fair statement of the case was not presented to the House, because they were, as a fact, the proposals of the late Secretary of State for War alone and not of Lord Roberts as they were led to believe. The Prime Minister did not accept the censure of the Commission with regard to the present system, and it appeared to him that the right hon. Gentleman, in order to please a powerful colleague, had, if he might use the phrase, "hedged." That made the Committee profoundly suspicious, and made it absolutely necessary to move this reduction on this occasion. As far as he understood the present position of the Government, it was that the Army Corps system which was now condemned by everyone except the Secretary of State for India was to be continued until it was condemned by this new Army Council. What was the authority of this new Army Council for condemning this system? The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War they knew was an ardent reformer from the speeches he made at other times below the Gangway, but this Army Council were newcomers, and even if the Committee took the four names which they had at present, those names were not the names of gentlemen who would carry the greatest weight with the House and the country. This great change would have to be made on the authority of the Cabinet and the authority of the Cabinet alone, and after the evidence which had been given by the Commission and the Report of that Commission, in his opinion the Government could act as soon as they pleased, and any delay on their part would not commend itself to the House or to the country. The details could be worked out by the Army Council.

Those who supported the increasing expenditure on the Navy were doubly bound to ask themselves whether the Military Estimates now before the country could be justified. He did not think they could be justified, and he thought that, in general terms, the reformers had made out their case. He contended that the Estimates called upon the taxpayers to make needless sacrifices for the land forces in this country, and that those forces could be reduced with advantage to the State and without the smallest diminution of striking power. When he last spoke on this subject he stated that even those who, in the past, had been most wedded to the old system, and had been opposed to the saving of large sums of money by considerably reducing the number of regular troops at home, had now come round more or less to the views of the Army reformers on this point. He then quoted several names from the War Commission evidence, but his hon. friend the Member for East Bristol rather objected to Lord Wolseley being taken as a supporter of the view he was then putting forward. Lord Wolseley, however, certainly did make a suggestion which supported the contention that the automatic increases at home, effected to correspond with the number of battalions abroad, forced us to maintain more battalions in this country than were necessary for the purposes of home defence, because in the Appendix to the War Commission Report this statement by Lord Wolseley appeared—

> "Under our present system of two battalion regiments, foreign demands can only be met by having a battalion at home for each battalion abroad. The four battalion system which exists in the Rifle Corps and the Rifle Brigade increases our power of having more battalions abroad than at home; further demands abroad still require increases abroad but not necessarily increases both abroad and at home."

That was his point. He maintained that reductions in the home forces could safely be made, and that by the adoption of the four battalion system or of the large depôt system, necessary increases abroad could be made without requiring corresponding increases at home. In that way the greatest bane of our military expenditure would be removed, and an end would be put to an extravagance which forced the War Office to refuse money where it ought to be spent, and the number of men at home would be largely reduced. The Commission had assumed that this change would be effected, and what the Committee desired to know was the date at which some such proposal would be adopted by the Government as a specific act of policy. They knew that the Secretary of State for War still held the views he formerly professed, but it was from the Cabinet as a whole they pressed for a specific assurance pointing to the adoption of this plan as soon as the details could be worked out by the Army Council. The Secretary of State was with them, but the Prime Minister had gone out of his way to weaken the promise which had been previously given. As to the extent to which reductions might safely be made opinions would differ. It was not for civilians to deal with details to that extent, but a very clever soldier—the late Captain Cairnes—worked out figures showing that 165 was the average relief for each 1,000 men in India, and that, in his opinion, one large depôt would suffice for the drafts for four battalions abroad. It could not be denied that by the adoption of this reform in some shape a very large reduction could be effected in the number of men at home, so that a diminution of anything like 10,000 men would be covered over and over again.

The suggestion had been made that the question was to some extent connected with that of the Militia and the Volunteers, which had been referred to the Duke of Norfolk's Commission. In a large view of the nature of the regular forces of infantry to be kept at home, the Militia and Volunteers undoubtedly ought to be taken into consideration, and it was impossible to deal with the garrison artillery question without considering the Militia by whom the fortresses in this country would probably be garrisoned. But that afforded an excuse for delay which he hoped would be rejected by the Government. The proceedings of the Norfolk Commission were not being published, consequently the nature of the evidence that was being taken and of the questions that were being asked could be judged only from gossip, the names of the witnesses, and remarks made by some of the witnesses in papers read by them. There seemed reason to fear, however, that the Commission was wasting its time by taking evidence upon conscription, the Militia Ballot, and all sorts of side questions; while, in addition, the reference to the Commission was not such as would entitle its opinion to have much effect on the minds of the Government. He implored the Government not to urge the sittings of the Commission as an additional reason for holding their hand in regard to these reforms. Perhaps he had spoken somewhat contemptuously of the evidence taken by the Norfolk Commission with regard to conscription and the Militia Ballot, but we were a practical people, and His Majesty's Government was deeply pledged against the adoption of any such system. That being so, a Commission which gave its mind to such questions was not likely to make suggestions of practical utility. The people of this country would not adopt the Militia Ballot while they paid £42,000,000 a year for the Fleet. The two things were inconsistent. The Government had now come round to the view that the question of home defence was primarily a naval question, and that as long as we held the command of the sea it was unnecessary to consider the problem of internal defence. But the Prime Minister, although he had made much progress, still failed to grasp the real conditions of the problem. The right hon. Gentleman said yesterday—

> "Let the House not forget what it too often has forgotten, that the size of our Army depends upon the duties that the Army has to perform."

That was not the case. The size of our Army abroad depended upon the duties it had to perform, but the size of our peace Army at home was at the present time an accident. It could not be pretended that the size of the home Army was based on calculations concerning the duties it had to perform; on the contrary, it existed, and because it existed sham duties had been found for it. The home Army was and must be mainly a depôt for the supply of reliefs to the foreign Army; it was from that point of view the matter should be looked at. He welcomed the Prime Minister's assertion that invasion was an illusory danger and not a contingency against which it was right or proper to ask this country to make costly provision, but still the present system, which was continued in these Estimates, forced [needless sacrifices upon the country for battalions which were not necessary at home in order to supply drafts which could be provided by a cheaper and smaller system. He begged to move that the number of men be reduced by 10,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 217,000, be maintained for the said Service."

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said it behoved them to look at this matter from a financial point of view. He admitted that it required more courage than he possessed to vote against the proposals put before Parliament for the defence of the country by those who were responsible, but everything encouraged them to believe that Vote A might be reduced. Men were being taken for Somaliland and the money was not provided for in the Estimates. As the right hon. Baronet had pointed out this was the moment or never, because if they passed Vote A they must vote the pay and all the establishment required to keep up the Army and it would be childish after voting the men and the money to complain of the expenditure on the Army. He asked the Committee to reflect for a moment upon the situation to which the country had been brought. Consols had fallen 30 per cent. and the reason for this was that the foundation of our credit had been sapped by interference with the Sinking Fund. There were rumours that it was to be interfered with again this year, and therefore it became absolutely necessary to see where they could economise. He thought Vote A was the one where economy could be effected with safety and 10,000 was an extremely moderate reduction. He recognised the gravity of any step that denied the responsible Minister the number of men and the money he asked for, but these men were not wanted for the defence of the country. He hoped the Committee would remember that this was the only occasion upon which the House could take any steps in the direction of economy which was so much needed, and if they passed this Vote he defied hon. Members to find any other opportunity of enforcing effectually the doctrine of economy. Although he recognised the gravity of the situation if the Amendment was pressed to a division he should most unhesitatingly vote for the reduction, because it would effect an economy in the finances of the country.

SIR JAMES JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) said he felt bound to support the right hon. Baronet's Amendment. When they considered the enormous expenditure upon the Army—which he had not yet voted against—he agreed that it was not absolutely necessary to keep such an immense Army in this country except to fill up the gaps that occurred in our Army abroad. He did not think the Government had sufficiently considered the recommendations of the Committee in regard to economy. He viewed the question with considerable anxiety when he remembered that not only had Consols fallen to 85, but every security in this country—some of them having been in the past considered almost gilt-edged securities—had fallen 25 or 30 per cent. At this figure it was almost impossible to raise sufficient money to successfully carry on industrial enterprises, and it was quite time that the Government began to study that little word "economy." Any ordinary business man when he knew a very serious claim was likely to be brought against him for money began to consider whether he could reduce his expenses or not. When they saw the expenditure not only in connection with the Government but in all their industries; when their municipal authorities were waiting to launch schemes upon the public for the expenditure of money and were only holding back owing to the serious condition of the money market he thought it was time to begin economising. There was scarcely a municipality in the country which was not waiting to apply for money. There was scarcely a railway company, gas company, or a water company that was not holding back some demands for money. In the face of all this it was necessary to economise wherever they could. They had had an abundant revenue for the last few years which had been disposed of in ways he disapproved of, and he thought the time had come when the Government should reconsider the financial position. He pitied any Government which would have to deal with the financial situation into which the present Government had brought the country.

COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, Bootle) said he wished to say a few words in regard to the matter before the Committee, because he had always taken a great interest in the welfare of the Army. They had heard a great deal from hon. Gentlemen opposite upon the point of economy. He agreed that economy was required in the present financial condition of the country, but the point was whether it was wise to carry this economy too far in regard to the defensive forces of the Crown. History repeated itself, and he thought the Committee would see that to reduce this Vote now would be repeating the old historical legend. It would be within the memory of hon. Members that when war broke out in South Africa no measure was too great or complicated and no cost too much in order to get together an Army sufficient for our military needs. What would happen now, if this reduction was carried, would be a repetition of the historical lesson which had happened over and over again in this country, namely, that military unreadiness was succeeded by military retrenchment without regard to efficiency. Therefore he asked the Committee to consider the question of efficiency. It had been said by various speakers that all these men were not required as long as our Navy commanded the sea. He agreed that it was necessary that we should have an overwhelmingly strong Navy, but, at the same time, it was within the bounds of possibility that our Navy might be opposed by such a powerful combination of the forces of other countries during an internecine struggle in Europe as to be placed in such a position that it would be difficult without an adequate number of troops to defend our shores from invasion. Therefore he did not think it would be wise to reduce the Regular forces of this country below a certain well ascertained limit. He was not going to say anything as to what that limit should be, but he felt sure that His Majesty's Ministers had most carefully considered the necessity for these men before asking for this number. The proposal of the Government, therefore, seemed to him quite reasonable. Comparing their forces with those of other countries, he could not think that 217,000 men for all the three arms in the United Kingdom was an exaggerated estimate for the military defence of this country.

He did not propose now to touch upon the other branches of this Vote, but he hoped that the rearrangement of the forces which was contemplated by the War Office would lead to a scheme being devised under which they would get greater efficiency and mobility than they had in the Army at the present time. As opportunities were few he would venture now to indicate broadly the lines on which he thought reconstruction might proceed. There was a recommendation in the second portion of the Report of the Committee to the effect that practically the linked battalion system was to be abolished. The linked battalion system should be abolished. Then came the question of how we were to get men. Supposing the present system were broken up, what did they propose to substitute for it? Referring to the organisation of the Infantry branch of the service, with which he was best acquainted, he said that the broad outline of our system must be that the Regular Army formed the first line of military defence, the Militia the second line, and the Volunteers the third line. A system should be arranged whereby those three lines would work in support of each other in such a way as would provide us with a possible expansion of our forces in war time without the necessity of retaining them on an extravagant basis in time of peace. Assuming that the linked battalion system was done away with, and that possibly the old numbers for the single battalions were restored, what was specially desirable was that we should have a system of refilling the battalions abroad without the necessity of keeping a corresponding number of battalions at home. When the present system was first proposed it seemed to him an impossible arrangement and, having been in practice for many years, it had been shown to be unsatisfactory. If that system were done away with he would meet the change in this way. Every battalion should have a depôt from which its ranks should be filled, whether at home or abroad. The answer would be given that there had always been depôts for these battalions, but he maintained that they had never been real depôts. They were, so to speak, skeletons or frameworks. There had been a prejudice at the War Office against the system of depôts, but his opinion was that every form of troops—every battalion of infantry, regiment of cavalry, and battery of artillery—should have a depôt and be capable of expansion when the strain of war came upon us. In order to accomplish this he should propose that the Line battalions should be divided into four companies with depôts consisting of two companies. The strength of the company with the colours should be 150 privates each, so that at all times the headquarters of the regiment should be kept up to the strength, and the depôts, which were at home, and which would consist of two companies capable of expansion in time of war, would fill the battalion in a very short space of time. He suggested that the territorial regiments should be composed as follows: First, of the Line battalions; second, of real depôts capable of expansion in time of war to fill the battalions; and third, of Reserve battalions into which officers and men who had served in the Line battalions could go. They should not have in the Reserve battalions the heterogeneous collection of officers and men who formed an unmanageable mass, but there should be a reserve battalion to each regiment into which officers and men should pass, and from which they could be called to serve, either in the depôt or with the colours, when they were wanted. Following on that there would be a Militia battalion, or battalions, kept at effective strength — a cheap force, full of zeal, and capable of expansion and of being brought into the fighting line if required. Under his scheme of Army reconstruction he wanted the Secretary of State for War to accept the position that the Militia should be the real Reserve and second line of the fighting Army. Behind the Militia would come the Volunteers. What happened at the outbreak of war? An order was given for mobilisation. He should propose that the depôt two companies might be made into combatant battalions. How could that be done? In the first instance he should call in a certain number of men from the reserve battalion, then he should allow 10 per cent. of the Militia battalion to volunteer for service and pass them into the depôt battalions, and in order to get the Militia regiment up to the full strength he should compel the affiliated Volunteer battalion to have at all times 100 men ready to fill up the Militia battalion, and to make up the war strength of the depôt. He believed that would supply a very large number of men. There was still another field from which they could get men. The Secretary of State for War said the other day that the Guards system of three years service and nine years in the Reserve was to be introduced into the Line battalions. He always thought that bad for the Guards.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): It has been introduced, and has been in force for some time.

COLONEL SANDYS said that in his judgment it was not a good system. He believed in having the battalions made up to the recognised strength by what he would call the finished article. They were all anxious to find out the reason why the classes who formerly entered the Army were no longer willing to enlist at the same rate as before. From the inquiries he had made he believed it was on account of the incessant change of conditions in regard to service in our Army. This had destroyed the confidence of the recruit-giving classes, and men would not come in now in the way they did formerly. Formerly a man would go into a regiment feeling sure that he would never be moved from it, and that at the end of twenty-one years service he would get a small pension which would help him to eke out a living for the rest of his days. That condition of affairs had to a large extent disappeared, and the result was that the class of men who used to enlist in the Army went into the police where the conditions were fixed. If they wanted to restore confidence they must look upon those who enlisted as men who found less attraction in gratuities and immediate benefits, than in the prospect of something substantial at the end of their military career. He was quite sure that if the Government would consider this point in connection with the recruit-giving classes they would get back their confidence. If that was not done he feared that recruiting would not improve, but rather diminish. The system of taking boys into the Navy was an excellent system, and he suggested that the advisability of introducing a system of boy recruiting for the Army, a source of supply which was yet untapped, should be considered by the Secretary of State. He would suggest that a boy company should form part of each depôt, that they should be under specially selected officers and non-commissioned officers, that they should be carefully attended to and trained, and that they should be separated from the evil influences which were supposed to follow depôts—influences which he felt would not prevail if depôts were placed under proper command. Boys enlisted at twelve years of age could be trained and taken into the ranks at eighteen on condition that they would give a certain number of years service. During the years of training each boy ought to be taught a trade so that he would be able to earn a living when he left the Army. It would work out in this way. At the end of six years there would be sixty boys at the depôt, and ten boys would be fully trained every year to pass into the ranks. Supposing there were 146 battalions and 146 depôts there would be ten times 146 trained soldiers passing into the ranks, and that would go on continuously as long as the British Army lasted. He ventured to think that if that plan were put in force, in conjunction with the depôt system, we should have a very valuable recruiting adjunct without much expense. Then, unskilled labourers who joined the Army should be taught some trade, because it was hardly fair that after twelve years service they should be turned adrift with no provision for themselves or their families. The Army should be regarded not only as a defensive force, but as an educational factor for the country.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said he desired to take this opportunity of drawing further attention to what he did not hesitate to describe as the perfectly senseless campaign that was now being waged in Somaliland. The Secretary of State had the previous day stated that it was no unusual thing for no Estimate to be made in the current year for such a campaign as that now going on in Somaliland, but the right hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean challenged that statement. As there was no money estimate asked for, he did not propose on the next or any succeeding Vote to refer to the campaign in Somaliland; but he would satisfy himself on that occasion, on the Vote for men by protesting as strongly as he could against the employment of one single man who was paid for by the taxpayers of this country and Ireland, in the operations in Somaliland. He said without the slightest hesitation that the conduct of the Government in connection with that campaign was not, and had not been, straightforward from the commencement. It was a perfectly monstrous state of things for the Secretary for War to come there and practically brush aside every criticism and every inquiry as to this campaign, with a general statement that he hoped in a short time things would be better, and that then it would be easier to tell how the campaign stood, and how it was proceeding. That might be a perfectly intelligent policy, if this was a campaign only just commencing; but it had been in progress for three long years, and there was not a single Member of the House of Commons or of the Government who could point to a single advantage gained by the people of this country or Empire by this three years campaign in Somaliland. And yet at the commencement of the fourth year of this campaign they were asked to trust the Government to continue it; and the only consolation they got was the vague statement, that in a short time it would be possible to understand and estimate how long it would further run and when they might see an end to the operations.

How was the campaign started? He could understand the commencement of the campaign in South Africa. It was on the plea that the rights and interests of British subjects had been interfered with. He himself did not think they had been interfered with; but it was an intelligent plea on behalf of the Government. What sort of British right or interest of any description had been interfered with in Somaliland? He ventured to say that it was not possible for any Secretary for War to get up and make a plain statement which would show that any right or interest of any British subject had been interfered with in Somaliland; and if that were so, why was the war undertaken at all? Of course they should be told that the war was undertaken for the purpose of keeping to the spirit and letter of certain treaties made on behalf of this country with certain tribes in East Africa; and that simply on the faith of those treaties rested all what the Government called a justification for this campaign. But what were those treaties? They were vague from beginning to end. In the first place, there was not in any of them anything to define the territory which should be under British protection, or where the natives would be entitled to receive the support of the British Government if attacked. Certain tribes were given to understand that they would be protected if attacked, but there was nothing to define the territory over which this protection was to extend. And what had happened? The scene of the war, ever since it had commenced, had been shifting weekly and monthly over a widely spread territory. He thought it was time for somebody, even though he were an Irish Member, to ask how far, and over what amount of territory, the government of those tribes went? A more preposterous proposition had never been made than that this country should be bound to protect those tribes all over Africa in territories not defined. If that was allowed, it meant that those warlike proceedings would be practically interminable and that the scene of the operations would be shifted from time to time and from place to place. Could the Government point to some objective in the shape of a city, town, village, or district which, if captured, would bring the war to an end? There had been nothing in the shape of explicit explanation from the Government as to why these operations were to be continued. With great deference, he ventured to make a prediction, although some of his predictions had been fulfilled to the letter. For instance, he held in his hand the volume of *Parliamentary Debates* for 1899, containing the report of the demand by the Government for a Vote for £10,000,000 to conduct the war in South Africa, and when the House was given to understand that that money would see the trouble in South Africa through. On that occasion he made a speech in which he said he felt convinced that, if that war went on, it would cost hundreds of millions, and hon. Members opposite shook with laughter and said his prediction was absurd. But the fact was that the cost of that war had run into £300,000,000 instead of £10,000,000. He predicted that if this campaign in Somaliland was not brought to an end soon it would cost the taxpayers of this country—and what was more the taxpayers of Ireland—millions and millions of money. [An HON. MEMBER on the MINISTERIAL Benches: How many millions?] He did not limit himself to a million or two; but he was perfectly certain it would cost millions with nothing to show in return.

He was the last person in the world to pick a quarrel or find fault with anybody; but he thought the action of the Opposition in reference to the Somaliland campaign was most contemptible. It was a monstrous thing to see the Opposition in the House of Commons tolerating what was going on in Somaliland without making one strong, united, serious proposition against it. Apparently, as they paid no attention to it, the Opposition were satisfied that the campaign should go on. Therefore, it was left to an Irish representative to point out the absurd and disastrous position into which the taxpayers of the country were being led by this wild and wasteful campaign in East Africa. He asked, was it an unreasonable thing that at the end of three years of futile war—a war which he had opposed all through and which had resulted in the sacrifice of a considerable number of gallant British officers and native levies—some information should be asked for from the Government as to when it was to come to an end? He thought that the relatives and friends of those men who had been blundered and muddled into their death and destruction by the policy of the Government in this war ought never to forgive the Government. He emphatically denied that his objection in raising this question was to delay the progress of the Estimates. The prolongation of the Somaliland campaign would be condemned generally throughout the country, if the people could be brought to a sense of their duty in the matter. 10,000 men were asked for, but no monetary provision was made. Two millions of money had already been spent, the campaign was entering its fourth year, and yet no money was to be asked for. Such a course was not only unprecedented; it was misleading to the last degree. The reason for the adoption of this course was probably the anxiety of the Government to divert public attention from the horrible muddle into which they had got the Somaliland business. The absence of provision would lead Members to suppose that the operations were coming or had come to an end, whereas, as a matter of fact, fighting on a considerable scale was still proceeding, and a large amount of money was certain to be required. He desired to ask the Secretary of State two or three plain Questions on the matter. Could he supplement the information already given as to the reasons for the war? Could he show that any British subjects were injured, or outraged, or interfered with in any way which made war necessary? Could he show that any British territory was invaded or threatened, or British interests jeopardised? Was there any reason for the campaign other than the fulfilment of certain treaties with certain native tribes? Was it not the fact that under those treaties the Government were bound to carry on warlike operations in protection of certain tribes, no matter to what part of Africa those tribes thought fit to go? What was the objective of the campaign, and what was to be done to bring this inglorious work to an end?

A telegram, alleged to have been from General Egerton, had recently appeared in the newspapers, in which it was intimated to the Mullah that nothing would bring the campaign to a close except his death or capture with a certain number of rifles. Was that an authentic despatch, and, if so, was it with the sanction of the Government that such a communication had been made by a British General to the head of the forces to which he was opposed? The Mullah had shown a considerable amount of military genius, he had inflicted certain reverses on the British troops, and human nature being the same all the world over, such a communication as that to which he had referred was just the thing to cause the prolongation of the struggle for an indefinite period. The issue of a declaration of this kind lent colour to the suggestion that a reward had possibly been offered for the capture of the Mullah, and it was certainly not the way in which a campaign should be conducted, whether against whites or blacks, civilised or uncivilised opponents.

He felt very strongly on this matter but there was one way by which he might be silenced. If the Government would make an arrangement by which Ireland would be relieved of any contribution in respect of these operations he would not say another word on the subject. England had a perfect right to do as she liked with her own money and her own Army, but should have no right whatever to start senseless campaigns for no useful purpose, involving the expenditure of millions of money, and expect the Irish people to bear any proportion of the cost. He held the opinion that, whatever might be said of these campaigns or operations, they could not in any conceivable way benefit Ireland; yet they would have to bear a full proportion of the cost. In the South African war, which he protested against again and again, they were told that it might ultimately benefit Ireland, because there would be a field in South Africa eventually for Irish emigration, if unfortunately the Irish had to emigrate. Well, everybody knew what the result had been. The field of emigration in South Africa was for Chinamen and not for any white race. But, however that might be, none could say that Somaliland would ever become a field for emigration. It was a country that could not be occupied for a single year; it was a country in which white men could not find any possible employment, and therefore the poor thin argument that it would open up a field for emigration fell to the ground. The Irish people paid a good deal too much for this sort of thing, and when he saw hundreds and thousands of pounds asked for campaigns of the Somaliland kind, and when he considered the condition of the districts which he and his hon. friends represented in Ireland, they felt thoroughly justified in protesting as they did. England was a very wealthy country, and the vast majority of its people had not the faintest shadow of an idea of the way in which thousands of people in Ireland lived. All round the coasts of Ireland there was poverty of the most grinding description. All along the coasts might be seen broken piers and breakwaters, and ruined harbours, which only needed a little money to be spent upon them to enable the people to develop the fishing industry of the country, which would bring prosperity to many thousands. They had the greatest difficulty in getting money for this purpose from Parliament, yet, in the case of Somaliland, they were expected to acquiesce agreeably and silently to the expenditure of hundreds of thousands of pounds. It was an injustice, and a proceeding which was characteristic of what had been going on for some years under the present Government. It did Ireland no good, and only increased the feeling which the people of Ireland entertained, namely, that the arrangement which exsisted was an unjust one and one that must be changed. There was no hope of there being any support to any protest of this kind, but it might be expected that there would be some protest from the representatives of the greatdemocracy who sat on the Opposition side of the House. Where were those representatives when this great expenditure was being sanctioned? With the exception of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, and one or two Scotch Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench, apparently not one of them took any interest in it. When next year came probably the same thing would happen when they had a Vote for £1,000,000 for Somaliland. He thought the Committee was entitled to ask from the Government if they had any idea of what was really to happen in Somaliland. Was the war to continue until the Mullah was either killed or captured, or when was it to end? He ventured to think that up to the present they had received no answer as to whether this costly and inglorious muddle was to go on year after year, but so long as it did go on he should protest against it.

Lord WILLOUGHBY DE ERESBY (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said he did not desire to address many Questions to the Government, but there was one of very great importance. It had now been admitted that our real object in having an Army at home was that it should be able to be sent over-seas to be employed abroad, and it was not fair to ask the Government for further details as to what part of the world we might require to send the Army, because no one could know where it would be required. His own opinion as regarded any reduction of the Army was that the watchword of the Army should be *ubique*, as it was not possible to say in what portion of the globe it would have to fight. One Question, however, the Secretary of State for War would have to answer, and that was how many men he expected to get during the next year's recruiting? Last year when they came to vote men for the Army 236,000 men were voted. How, many of those men were obtained during last year? This year there was a small reduction made and only 227,000 were asked for. It was no good asking the right hon. Gentleman how many men he hoped to get, because the obvious answer would be that he hoped to get them all, but it was a fair question to ask how many men he expected to get, and after all that was the main question when the Committee were voting a number of men and the money to keep them. The money voted in the previous year was not required for our home establishment. Our battalion average was 800 men, and during the greater portion of the previous year they were only 600 to a battalion, and he would like to know what had, become of the money voted for the extra 200 men for each battalion. It was no doubt used for other purposes, but it was ridiculous to ask for a large amount of money for men that did not exist. He did not wish to make it harder for the War Office in the scheme of reorganisation of the Army, but he would like to know how many men were actually in the Army last year, and how many recruits did they expect to get. In all is question of Army reform it appeared to him that it did not matter one farthing whether the men were formed into Army Corps or into territorial commands—there still remained only 200,000 men, and he thought any scheme for the reorganisation of the Army ought to be based on the number of recruits that could be obtained.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER thought his noble friend had been misled by an insufficient perusal of the documents contained in the Estimates. He could assure his noble friend that the Army was not under strength. On the contrary, it was over strength. It was a fact that the Infantry and the Guards were to a certain extent under strength, but during the past year the Army as a whole was considerably overborne. The result was that they were compelled to come down to the House and ask for an additional sum to provide the pay which was not down in the Estimates for the year. The suggestion that they had diverted money which was intended for the pay of the men to other purposes, therefore, fell to the ground. The number of recruits they were getting now was as large as, in fact, much larger than they had ever got before at any time, except during the war. He would also remind the hon. Member that he had entirely omitted from his consideration the fact that although during last year two important branches of the Army—the Cavalry and Artillery—and several subsidiary branches were closed to recruiting, they got no less than 40,000 men. He did not think, in view of the larger pay that was coming into force next year, they need despair of getting the number of recruits they required. The difficulties connected with recruiting would be, he thought, of a different kind. They would concern the quality of the recruits, and also the conditions under which they served.

Mr. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) asked the hon. Gentleman to explain how it was that there were 600 recruits less in January than in January last year.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he could not account for the want of regularity in the recruiting for any particular month. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean had said many things with which he agreed, but he could not agree with him when he said that it was the duty of hon. Members to vote for a reduction in the number of men. It might be the duty of the right hon. Baronet to vote against the number of men asked for upon some ground of principle, but he did say most emphatically, as the Minister responsible for the time being for the Army, that he was confident that if such a reduction as had been suggested were carried into effect it would have a very disastrous effect indeed upon the Army. He agreed with the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, that we ought to have a system by which the number of men at home would not correspond to the number of men abroad, and he was confident it was possible to devise machinery to secure that object. But if they stopped the present machinery before they had something to put in its place, and so diminished the output of effective troops, they would do a great disservice to the cause of the Empire in all parts of the world. He did not know whether he could persuade hon. Members that that was a sufficient reason why they should abstain from voting for this reduction, but to him it seemed a sound and adequate reason. He agreed that they were not supplying the men in the most economical manner, and the great change of policy described by the Prime Minister, by which our Army ceased to be regarded as a source of supply to the Army over-sea, must inevitably cause them to modify their views as to the necessity for maintaining the same number of units at home and abroad. He could only repeat what he had already said about Somaliland.

*MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman held out the hope of a specific reduction in battalions.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that was certainly his hope.

*MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL asked whether he could give any indication of the scale.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said his hon. friend must not press him too far. He had his ideas on this subject, but he thought it would be very disadvantageous to give statements and figures which he might have to recall later on. With regard to Somaliland his reasons might not seem adequate, but he was not in a position to say more about it at the present time, except that he had no official knowledge of the telegram which had been referred to.

MR. O'MARA: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire from General Egerton.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he was in constant communication with General Egerton. He had not received any telegram to the effect described. The action indicated was certainly not in pursuance of any instructions given from this country. He had been asked what was the cause of these operations. They had been undertaken because those under our protection had been attacked, not once, but two or three times. He appealed to the Committee to allow this Vote to be passed.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said that the argument of the Secretary of State for War was that in his opinion it was essential to have the number of men which he had put upon the Estimates. He contended that the Committee was not justified in putting this burden on the country without having a much clearer idea than had been given to it of the objects for which the expenditure was required. The noble Lord opposite had put forward the doctrine that it would depend upon the recruiting sergeant as well as upon the Secretary of State for War as to whether the full number of recruits would enter the Army this year. No one would dispute the doctrine that the Army ought to be fit to serve anywhere, but they did dispute that numbers necessarily constituted efficiency. He believed they had a larger number upon paper now than they would be able to bring to a high standard of efficiency. What reason was there for maintaining 130,000 men at home. The reason given was that in view of the condition of affairs upon the Indian frontier they had to maintain that large number of men in this country to reinforce adequately the garrison of India, but that was a doctrine which he had never accepted. The best means of securing the safety of India had been taken by the Government in re-arming the Artillery and the Infantry and in strengthening the garrison there and maintaining a considerable number of troops in South Africa. He did not think that a case had been made out for the maintenance of such a great number of men at home. They could in case of need call upon a great number of men in this country who were accustomed to war, and no sound or adequate reason had been given for maintaining such a large number of troops in this country. The sum they had voted to the Navy this year had rendered the position of this country secure, and if the number were reduced by 10,000 we should still have a sufficient Army, which we ought to spare nothing to render thoroughly efficient. He was satisfied that this reduction was necessary, and he should heartily support it. If the right hon. Gentleman expected the Committee to support Estimates of this magnitude he must be prepared to give fuller information and take the Committee more into the confidence of the War Office in regard to their plans. Without fuller information the Committee was not justified merely upon the opinion of the Secretary of State for War in voting this vast number of men.

*MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL said that some Members on that side were placed in a difficult position in view of the reduction of 27,000 men for which twenty-seven of them voted last year. Nothing in the Estimates showed that the circumstances against which they then protested were altered to-day, and he could not say that the reduction now proposed was unwise or would be prejudicial to the interests of the country. He felt most strongly that what they required was a smaller and a cheaper Army. He had a good deal of faith in what his right hon. friend was going to do, and he believed it would be possible for him to effect some substantial reduction in the number of men and the cost of the Army without making any proportionate diminution in the actual fighting strength of the forces. Everybody who took an interest in the Army independently of Party politics would desire that the right hon. Gentleman should have a fair opportunity of trying to solve the riddle with which he was confronted. In these circumstances he was not prepared to embarass the right hon. Gentleman by voting against him on this occasion.

*CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.) said he desired to make his position perfectly clear in voting for the reduction. He would vote for the reduction purely on principle. The Estimates dealt with a system which we had reason to believe had become inadequate. He desired to give support to the views which the present Secretary for War was believed to hold, and asked for a declaration from him whether he had the support of the Cabinet in regard to the views which he would wish to carry out. They had the Secretary of State for War speaking with one voice and pledged to a certain system of reform, and on the other hand they had reason to believe that in the Cabinet there were three former Secretaries of State for War, and, as far as was known, the Prime Minister, wedded to the six paper Army Corps. What the Committee wanted to know was whether the Secretary of State for War was in a position to carry out the programme which he had advocated over and over again from below the Gangway. The Prime Minister had stated that the Army Corps scheme had failed. The Estimates were based on that scheme, but according to what was foreshadowed in the Report it seemed that some other system was about to take its place. The Secretary of State for War had said that the details must be left to the Council. But the Council was the creation of the Cabinet, and the Prime Minister was in a position to accept or refuse any of the recommendations of the Council which he thought fit. The Secretary of State for War asked the other day what were the duties the Army was intended to perform. The right hon. Gentleman said there were doubts concerning it, but there were no doubts on his part, or on that of almost all those who claimed to be Army reformers, on either side of the House, in that matter. They had always held that what was required was a mobile striking force, small, but of good quality, within this country, and also that for the defence of the Empire we should have a steady flow of proper recruits who would serve a sufficient time in India to make the garrison there efficient, and not what it was at present, to a great extent inefficient. What was the present system for which these Estimates were placed before the House? They were for keeping up a system to which many hon. Members were absolutely opposed. He drew attention the other day to a matter in connection with recruiting which struck at the basis of the present system, namely, the keeping up of a large number of battalions at home, and the filling of these, at the expense of the taxpayers, with undesirable men. These men when sent out to India, had to be sent up to the hills, and then drafted home, for they were totally unsuited to garrison India. It did not pay the Indian Government to take recruits unless they served five years in India; yet in order to carry out the absurd system of linked battalions, which had signally failed, the taxpayers were saddled with an expense of £500,000 in respect of these youths sent out to India. There were many men who had served in the South African campaign who would be glad to serve for five or seven years in India. What we wanted was an efficient garrison for India and a small striking force at home. The Committee were completely in the dark with reference to that situation. The right hon. Gentleman had not foreshadowed in the smallest degree what was going to be done with reference to the Auxiliary Forces. They knew from his own words that the Militia were in a deplorable state, but he had not shown where either officers or men were to be obtained for that force. They knew that there was a Committee sitting with reference to the Volunteers, but they had no certainty that there was any future for that force. Such being the state of chaos in every branch of the defensive forces of the Empire was it fair to ask the Committee to vote this large number of men unless they got an assurance that a complete change would occur before the close of the financial year? He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would indicate approximately the date when the reduction foreshawed would take place.

CAPTAIN BAGOT (Westmoreland, Kendal) hoped that commanding officers would be allowed to take on three-year men of good character at the expiry of the three years for another year or so.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that had already been done.

CAPTAIN BAGOT said that arrrangement would be much appreciated. He believed it would tend to increase the battalions. He suggested that, after three years service, men might be allowed to take a furlough of two or three months and then return and complete their time with the Reserves. He thought it would be of great advantage if 5,000 of the Yeomanry who could ride and shoot well were registered as liable to be called on for service, either with mounted infantry, cavalry regiments, or as a separate force. Such men should receive £5 a year as a registration fee, and the cost, £25,000, might be met by reducing the nineteen days now allowed for Yeomanry training, which was too long a period, to seventeen days. He did not propose that the right hon. Gentleman should make that addition to his Estimates unless he could make a saving in another direction. Roughly speaking, the cost of these 5,000 registered men at £5 each would be £25,000. Well, the present period of Yeomanry training was nineteen days, which most Yeomanry officers believed, under present circumstances, to be too long. If that period were reduced by two days, the saving would be nearly £25,000, which would cover the cost of the 5,000 registered men. He knew that certain Yeomanry officers, supported by the Secretary for India, objected to the scheme on the ground, first of all, that there would be two classes of men in the regiment and that there might be great jealousy between them. He thought that was a feeble objection. He had consulted private soldiers in the Yeomanry and the permanent staffs and they all thought the scheme a most excellent one, and that there would be no jealousy whatever. The second objection was that all the best men in the regiment would be taken away in time of war, leaving only the indifferent men in the ranks. Again he thought that objection was feeble, for there would be plenty of time to get the indifferent men up to a proper and efficient state of discipline in the case of war. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would consider this scheme favourably. There was another matter he would like to refer to. He saw that the School of Instruction for Cavalry and Yeomanry officers and non-commissioned officers had been very properly re-established and that a further sum of money had been expended on it. A very large sum was also spent on a School of Instruction for Mounted Infantry, and that had been doubled in the Estimates this year. He thought the question of Mounted Infantry had rather fallen into abeyance, and that there were now no mounted infantry

This School, which cost £14,000 a year, was to teach a certain number of infantry men to do mounted duty; but instead of teaching infantry soldiers to ride the money should be spent in teaching the cavalry to shoot. The proper way to provide mounted infantry was to get them from the Yeomanry; and the 5,000 men to which he had referred would be absolutely well suited to make the mounted infantry regiments.

Mr. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden) said that during the twelve years he had been in the House he had not trespassed in the debates on the Votes for either the Navy or Army; but he felt that the time had come when he was bound, in the interest of the constituency he represented, to make some protest against the constant and steady increase in the amount of our permanent armaments. He did not know whether the House realised the condition of affairs from a financial point of view in this country compared with other countries. He found that for the military line of defence France paid £32,189,000; Germany £31,889,000; the United States £24,383,000; and Russia £36,647,000. It seemed to him unnecessary that this country should incur an expenditure for the Army greater than any other country except Russia. But the £33,000,000 which we paid for our Army service was only for these little islands of Great Britain and Ireland. But if the expenditure of the Army in India and the Colonies was included it amounted to £54,000,000. Again, if the total expenditure on the Army and Navy were taken into consideration, France spent £44,728,000; Germany, £42,132,000; United States, £41,208,000; Russia, £48,986,000, while the British Empire spent on the same services £96,000,000 a year, or twice more than any other civilised country in the world. They might, therefore, well ask the Government to try and reduce that amount instead of increasing it. It seemed to him that never had a reduction in this expenditure been moved with a greater amount of argument than at the present moment. Our trade was in a depressed condition; our people were taxed, as they had never been before, in connection with the war in South Africa; and it was absolutely necessary that we should have economy in public expenditure. The Secretary for War told the Committee that the wear and tear and waste of the machine at the present time was greater than it ought to be, and that was a full justification for hon. Members to go into the Division Lobby in favour of reduction. Some allusion had been made to Somaliland and to the necessity of the Government policy being made clear to the House and the country in connection with the expedition. If the Government had taken notice of the warnings given to it, in time, there would havebeen no necessity for this force being sent out to East Africa. The Government had full warnings when the raids took place in that country, but no notice was taken of them. When the Indian Government had control of Somaliland there was no difficulty in that country. Those engaged in administering Protectorates like Somaliland adhered to their proper functions and there was good government. But the case was changed when Somaliland was handed over to the Foreign Office. The natives who trusted to us were left without arms, and when the local authorities wanted the support of the Government in order to put down breaches of the peace no notice was taken of their demands. It was not until the Mullah had had time to raise a large force and massacre a whole country side that the country became in the condition it was now found in. At the present moment Parliament and the country did not know what the policy of the Government was in regard to that muddle in Somaliland, and on that ground also the Committee was fully justified in voting for the reduction moved by the right hon. Member.

General LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) said that some allusion had been made last year as to the desirability of a considerable reduction in the *personnel* of the Army, and he shared that opinion very strongly. He shared it still, and yet he was not prepared to vote for the reduction of the Vote proposed by the right hon. Gentleman. And for this reason—following the advice of President Lincoln—he did not believe in swopping horses when crossing a stream. At this moment he trusted that we were about to cross a stream, and he hoped that after the stream was crossed we should put things on a thorough business-like footing. But at the present moment we had battalions abroad that must be kept up to their strength and the only plan for doing so, just now, was the unfortunate system of linked battalions. He very much regretted that the Secretary for War had decided to reduce the strength of the home battalions by fifty men each.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I did not reduce them; they reduced themselves.

GENERAL LAURIE said that that only showed that the recruiting was in a bad state, and that the organisation of the Army was in a worse state even than he thought it. He would rather have seen efforts made to maintain the strength of these battalions, because they were the training ground on which to make soldiers and officers. A home battalion was largely composed of staff, band, and various men, perfectly useful in themselves, but not efficient as contributions to the foreign service battalion of the regiment. If 10,000 men were taken from the Army they would have to be taken from the home battalions, and the home battalions could not stand any such reduction. What would be the strength then of the battalions as a training force? They would be useless. We must carry on the present system as it was, expensive as it might be, and hope for such reorganisation as to maintain an efficient military force at less expense as soon as possible.

MR. O'MARA complained that no answer had been given with regard to the Questions put to the Government as to their policy in Somaliland, and with regard to the message that had been sent to the Mullah by General Egerton, to the effect that the war would continue until the Mullah were either killed or captured. He asked, did anyone believe that, as a result of the message, this man who had proved his courage for so long would come in and surrender? Suggestions had been made in this House as to whether the wells in this desert and barren land should be poisoned. Was it not a fact that during the recent barren season the wells had been guarded in such a way that not only had the Mullah's troops been kept from getting water, but also their women and children, who were dying of thirst at the present time. Was that a humane way of conducting a war? Must the women and children as well as the combatants be killed by thirst in this arid and desert place? He also asked whether the Indian soldiers employed were not footsore and tired, and whether they were not disappointed at the prolongation and the negative result of the war. He regarded the result of the three years campaign in Somaliland in the same light as it had been regarded by the hon. Member for West Clare, as an absolute waste of the taxpayers' money, and he characterised the presentation of the present Estimates to the Committee without any item for the campaign in Somaliland as a dishonest measure. He had taken a good deal of interest in these Estimates, but had come to the conclusion that it was useless to attempt to discuss them in this House, because what really occurred was that Estimates were presented to, and passed by the House for men that did not exist, and the money so obtained was devoted to other purposes. The Militia was 40,000 and the Volunteers were 100,000 below strength, yet for years money had been obtained from the House for those forces which could not possibly have been devoted to the purpose for which it was voted. It was a ridiculous thing to vote money for the pay of men who it was known beforehand did not exist. And the result was that every year about the month of June the Government brought in a Resolution to indemnify the War Office for having appropriated money for one purpose which had been voted for another. An amount closely approximating that which was really required for the pay of the Army ought to be put before the House. His recollection was that ever since he had been in the House about £1,000,000 in excess of what was required for the pay of the Army was voted every year, and his submission was that the Estimates, as prepared, really threw dust in the eyes of the country and deceived the country as to the real cost of the Army. There was an item in the present Estimates of £13,000 for the extra expense of keeping the Army in South Africa. He was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition protest against an Army being kept there at all, and he quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that if an Army must necessarily be kept in South Africa the Colonies ought to bear some share of the expense. Having regard to the amount Ireland had to pay for the upkeep of an Army which she did not require, he could not see why the Colonies should not pay a proportion of the cost of the armies kept in the Colonies. He thought they ought to pay a fair share of the expense incurred for their protection. He suggested that a similar pledge should be given by the Secretary of State for War with regard to the Military Works Bill as was given by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty with regard to the Naval Works Bill, namely, that he should append a statement to the Estimates showing how the £15,000,000 voted for Military Works was spent. He pressed the right hon. Gentleman to say what the real policy of the Government was in regard to Somaliland, and asked whether there was any finality in it, or whether, if the Mullah were not captured before the rainy season now due, General Egerton was to be engaged again in pursuing him all over those barren wastes and useless country. If Irish money was not spent on these madcap ventures he should have nothing to say upon the Estimates, but so long as Irish money was used and this war was continued, he should continue to protest against it and press the Government to arrive at some finality in their policy.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) pressed for a more definite statement with regard to the operations in Somaliland. Two contradictory declarations had been made—one by the right hon. Gentleman to the effect that a favourable opportunity would be taken of bringing the war to a close, and the other in a telegram, purporting to come from the General in command, that there was no intention of terminating the operations until the Mullah was either killed or captured. He desired to ask a plain question: Was that telegram authentic; if so, was it authorised by His Majesty's Government? As to the proposal to reduce the Vote by 10,000 men, he would gladly vote in its favour. Substantial reductions in the Army Estimates had been promised, but there was no sign of the fulfilment of those promises. In the commercial interests of the country protests against the attitude of the Government were necessary. The great expenditure in the Army and the Navy was justified on the ground that it was for the insurance of our trade, but unless the present system was amended the very trade which these services were supposed to protect would be strangled and destroyed. The heavy burden of taxation was one of the principal causes of the depression in trade, and it was the duty of the Committee not to allow any Vote to pass without pressing on the Government the necessity of effective measures being introduced to bring about substantial reductions in the expenditure of the country.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND remarked that civil questions deserved civil answers, and he thought he had a right to a reply on the particular points he had raised.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that a civil answer deserved civil attention, but after asking his questions the hon. Member left the House, and consequently was absent when the reply was made.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND expressed his regret that he should have been absent during the right hon. Gentleman's remarks. He understood, however, that a direct answer was not given to the direct question he had put. What he wanted to know was whether the telegram alleged to have been sent by General Egerton was genuine, and if so, whether it was sent by the cognisance or by the authority of the Government.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that, not as a matter of right, but as a matter of courtesy, he would repeat his reply to the hon. Member. The Government knew nothing whatever about the telegram in question, no official telegram had been received on the matter; and it was not sent in accordance with any official instructions.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said that that answer justified him in asking that the right hon. Gentleman should ascertain whether the telegram was actually sent.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) drew attention to the enormous number of generals employed in the Army. In asking for a pledge that some reduction should be made in this respect he contended that he was not making an unreasonable demand, because, even allowing for the extent of the Empire, the disproportion between the number of our general officers and the number in foreign armies was so extraordinary that it really demanded the serious attention of the authorities at the War Office. Seeing that the Army Corps system was to be done away with at once, there ought to be some reduction in the number of generals. According to the Estimates, we had five full generals, five lieutenant-generals, thirty-three major-generals, and twenty-one brigadier-generals. That was surely an ample supply of generals for an Army of 600,000 men. In addition to these there were a considerable number of generals on half-pay. In many cases a major-general was employed where a brigadier-general would do equally well. It was sometimes said to be an economy to employ these men, because if a general was placed on half-pay there would be the pay of a colonel to be found in addition. But that only bore out his point that we had too many general officers. At Gibraltar there were three generals to a force of less than 10,000 men. It was true that one was governor, another was an artillery general, and the third was an infantry general. The governor, however, at so small a place, would be amply qualified and have plenty of leisure to discharge the duties of general, and a great saving would be effected by the substitution of artillery and infantry colonels for the other two generals. The reductions could not all be made at once, but at any rate a promise might be given that no further promotions should be made for the present, certainly of men who had not recently distinguished themselves on active service. If the right hon. Gentleman would give a pledge of economy in this matter it would show that he was anxious not only for the efficiency of the service, but also for a reduction of expenditure. Economy now would greatly assist the right hon. Gentleman in getting his demands satisfied later on. Unless reductions were made in time the country would distrust the power of the War Office to make them. It was no use saying that the Army must be what the Empire required it to be. The Army would always be what the country was willing to pay for, and unless the War Office showed a desire to effect real retrenchment the country might get so alarmed at the expenditure as to force reductions which would be dangerous to the future of the Army. Unless the Government gave some pledge in the matter it would be the duty of the Committee not only to press for reductions but even to divide against the Votes.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) said that last year they voted large sums for improvement of the pay, and as the general conditions of the Army were better, and one would have thought that that would have attracted more recruits for the Army. He should have thought that the war and the state of the home trade, and the fact that such a large number of men were unemployed, would have facilitated recruiting.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that the state of recruiting was not bad.

MR. SOARES said he understood that the right hon. Gentleman had not got as many men as he wanted.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that after the war a very large number of men left the country. If the hon. Gentleman looked at the recruiting returns carefully he would find that they were not bad.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said he should have no difficulty with regard to the vote he was going to give, and he only regretted that the reduction moved was not larger. What they wanted was a reduction in their general expenditure upon armaments. Their expenditure at the present time on armaments was £95,500,000, and of this vast amount the United Kingdom had to pay £73,500,000. They could not afford that amount as the normal expenditure upon armaments. Complaints had been made from both sides of the House with regard to the enormous expenditure, and the only way to bring about economy was to vote for a heavy reduction in the number of men, for that was the only way to prevent Ministers coming down to the House with new schemes. The Secretary of State for War had practically admitted that the reduction was infinitesimal in the normal expenditure on the Army. They had heard about the

War Office scheme for the reorganisation of the Army, but he did not know in what position that scheme was, or whether it was to be carried out in its entirety. They had heard that a member of the Cabinet had threatened to resign unless that scheme was modified. They knew that the Prime Minister had only to be threatened with a resignation in order to change his whole policy. Two years ago the Prime Minister praised the scheme of the Secretary for India, but the present scheme practically made a scapegoat of the Secretary of State for India, for it meant that his scheme was a rotten one and that he knew nothing about the question. He had invariably found that the only effect of such schemes was to stave off criticism and increase the expenditure of the Army. He did not say that this new scheme would have that effect, but, judging from past experience, it was exceedingly probable. They had been told that the primary business of the Army was to conduct military operations across the sea, but if a Minister got hold of a large quantity of soldiers he would very soon find some cause to employ them. They had an instance of this in Somaliland, and he had not the slightest idea why they were at war with this respectable prophet, who was a brave man struggling to be free and maintaining the independence of his country. There might be good reasons for these operations, but they had not yet been given, and they had simply drifted into the war in Somaliland. The cost of those operations had gone up and in these Estimates not one farthing was put down for Somaliland. Those operations were sure to cost something, and some amount ought to be put in the Estimates if they were to be really an anticipation of what they were likely to spend. Probably they would have a Supplementary Estimate presented, but it was a very bad system, and that was one reason why he should vote for this reduction. They were told by the Prime Minister yesterday, when the Leader of the Opposition protested against maintaining an army of 21,000 men in Cape Colony, that it was monstrous and scandalous and that the right hon. Gentleman was an enemy to his country because the very idea of reducing the number of the garrison in South Africa might induce the Boers to break out in rebellion. The forecasts which he and his friend had made as to the result of the war had proved to be correct, although at the time they were spoken of as traitors to their country. He voted for this reduction upon three grounds. In the first place it was an old constitutional doctrine that when they had a Government which was excessively pernicious and they could not get rid of it they ought to refuse supplies. Upon that principle it was his intention to vote for any reduction of any kind that might be proposed by anyone in this House. His second objection was that they had all declared that the expenditure upon armaments was too great and the only way to protest against this was to vote against all sums of money for armaments. His third reason was that they had been told that this was only a provisional Estimate, and that there was a scheme to be brought in which would revolutionise everything. Under those circumstances he thought the right hon. Gentleman ought to take back these Estimates in order to calculate the amount that would be required. He hoped hon. Members on the Opposition side would move as many reductions as possible, and if they did they would have his most cordial support.

MR. BOND (Nottingham, E.) asked if the War Office had insisted upon those qualifications for efficient service which were last year so strongly emphasised. They were paying, at the present time, a great deal more for their soldiers, and they were told last year that great care would be taken to see that the men who enlisted were really of good character, and that they would be drawn from a rather superior class than the soldiers, up to that time, had been drawn from. He wished to know if those conditions had been complied with and insisted upon.

*MR. AINSWORTH (Argyleshire) said that if they voted the number of men asked for, they would be bound to vote the cost which would naturally follow. Therefore he thought the way to begin was by reducing the number of men. The right hon. Baronet had said the number of men required for foreign service depended upon the duties they had to perform. He wished to know who was responsible for arranging those duties. Until they knew what the policy of the Government was on these matters they had no idea what the duties were which the men were required to perform. The principle he would like to impress upon the Front Ministerial Bench was that "Expenditure depended upon Policy," and, until they knew what the policy was, they had no means of criticising the expenditure. He should like to know what were the duties of these 20,000 men in South Africa, and these 6,000 or 8,000 men for Somaliland. Why were they sending those men there? They did not want "more territory or more gold-fields." Now they were face to face with the establishment of a permanent garrison of 20,000 men in a British colony, the cost of which was not to be paid by the Colonies, but by the taxpayers of this country. They wished to know what was the object of this garrison in South Africa. If that garrison was to be permanent what became of the policy of representative government in South Africa? Before this Vote was passed the Committee should get from the Government an explanation of what the policy in South Africa was. In regard to Somaliland he thought that when we had succeeded in driving the Mullah out of the territories under our protection he might have been left alone. He did not think we were bound to undertake a military expedition every time a "prophet" appeared on the borders of the British Empire.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 155; Noes, 228. (Division List 47.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt. EC(S. Andrw'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Sir Francis H. (Maidstone
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hammond, John
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphseys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R (Northants

Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, John Lawson (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Charles Hobhouse.

NOES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A.J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J.A. (Glasgow
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A (Worc
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph C.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir John E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj Evans-(T'r H'mlets
Gore, Hn. G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, James (Staffords. N.W.)
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J. F (Sheffield, Brightside)
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Horner, Frederick William
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbighs
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N.R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick G.
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green

Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. Edw. J.
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES,—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Original Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 259; Noes, 84. (Division List No. 48.)

AYES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Black, Alexander William
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark).
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Dorington, Rt. Hn. Sir John E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Edwards, Frank
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt E C (S. Andrw's Bghs.
Emmott, Alfred
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj. Evans (T'r T'mlets
Gore, Hn. G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, James (Staffords. N. W.
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Horner, Frederick William
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo T. (Denbigh
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)

Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N.R
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick G.
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Moore, William
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pirie, Duncan V.
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Rea, Russell
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. Edw. J.
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Edward Jas, (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M‘Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G (Oxf'd Univ
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Ure, Alexander
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cullinan, J.
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dobbie, Joseph
Doogan, P. C.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Sir Francis H (Maidstone
Farrell, James Patrick
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Helme, Norval Watson
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M‘Crae, George
M‘Hugh, Patrick A.
M‘Kean, John
M‘Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)

Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,746,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of His Majesty's Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

*MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green) said on this Vote he wished to call attention to the action of certain officers in Ireland issuing instructions to young men joining His Majesty's Army to deal exclusively with English firms. He said that in answer to a Question he had put, the Financial Secretary to the War Office had told him that it was not the intention of the War Office to interfere in any way with young officers placing contracts for the supply of kit and uniform with whatever firm they desired. He had then drawn the attention of the Financial Secretary to the War Office to a War Office Circular issued to commanding officers in which certain forms were recommended to officers by which their orders for kit and uniform should be placed with certain firms and asked whether the business was open to competition. The Financial Secretary replied that he had been misinformed, and that a circular had been issued to a certain number of tailors asking for their terms for strict cash payments. Now, he contended, that the circular issued by the late Commander-in-Chief was a direct interference with the right of young officers to deal with what firms they liked. The effect of the circular had been to do serious injury to the trade and to the workmen of Ireland. He would do the late Commander-in-Chief the justice to say that he did not believe that that gallant officer had ever intended the serious consequences that had resulted from his circular. But he could find no information that Irish firms had been asked to tender for any of the articles for kit or uniform.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next; Committee also report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS) BILL (BY ORDER).

*SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.) said, in moving the Motion which stood in his name, he should have to go into the Bill at some length, for the reason that it was not only important from the point of view that it was promoted by the London County Council, but also from the fact that if the principles of the Bill were adopted by the House and a right given to the London County Council to slaughter cattle supposed to be suffering from tuberculosis of the udder upon insufficient grounds, that principle must eventually be extended to every borough council throughout the country. That being so it was desirable that this House should decide whether it was advisable to give the London County Council these powers. He approached this Bill in no hostile sense, seeing that, as the Parliamentary Chairman of the Central Chamber of Agriculture, he had approached the London County Council to discuss the subject matter of his instruction in a friendly spirit, as it was to the interest of all agriculturists that no milk infected with tuberculosis should be supplied to the public, and that the citizens of our great cities should be protected in every possible way. The London County Council, however, met him with a *non possumus* attitude and compelled him to take his present action in bringing the matter before the House. He had done everything in his power to settle this question outside the House in an amicable way before adopting his present course. The hon. Member traced the history of Clause 34, and pointed out that its insertion into this Bill was due to the "model milk clauses" being taken out of the Act of 1892 by the House of Lords, who said that if the citizens of London wished to deal with this question it was the borough councils of London who should come to this House and take powers to apply the model milk clauses. One objection the agriculturists had to the Bill was that it proposed that a cow should be condemned on the *ipse dixit* of a veterinary surgeon after what was called a clinical examination, which was a superficial examination at best, such as taking a cow's temperature. What the agriculturists asked was that a suspected cow should be isolated as a suspected case, but that before it was destroyed there should be a bacteriological examination of the milk of the cow, and if after the cow had been slaughtered it was found that she had not tuberculosis of the udder, then he concluded it was only fair that full and adequate compensation should be paid to the owner. They wanted a definition of "full compensation." The full market value of the cow at the time she was slaughtered might, and in all probability would, not meet the case, because the cow might be a very good milker, a deep milker, and a very valuable cow to the owner, and it might be that at the time she was slaughtered cows had fallen in value for some reason. There was a great difference in the market value of cows at different times of the year according to whether there was a large or small supply of milk, and the London County Council only proposed to give the market value at the time. The cows taken might be the best of a particular herd, and very deep milkers, and for that reason very valuable to the owner, and this matter had to be considered from that point of view; because there was not only the loss to the owner of the cows in question, but the House must remember that it was the desire of those interested in the breeding of good dairy stock to keep those cows which were deep milkers in order that they might breed from them not only for the replenishing of the dairy, but in order to get good bulls for use on their herd of cows and for sale, as bulls out of good milkers were always in demand. It was essential for breeding good dairy stock to have bulls bred from the best and deepest milking strain possible. For that reason he had suggested in the Instruction that it be an Instruction to the Committee to insert provisions in the Bill to provide that a cow suspected of suffering from tuberculosis of the udder may be removed, and that a sample of such cow's milk shall be submitted before slaughter to the medical officer of health for the county for bacteriological examination, and to provide, if this examination shows evidence that the cow is so diseased, that the animal shall be slaughtered in the presence of and examined by a veterinary surgeon appointed in the way proposed in Sub-section (2) of Clause 34; and to provide that if, on examination, the veterinary surgeon certifies that such cow was not suffering from tuberculosis of the udder, the council shall pay, in addition to the compensation provided for in Sub-section (3) of Clause 34, a sum not exceeding 50 per cent. of the full value of such cow immediately before slaughter, as special damages for the loss of such cow, as the market value did not compensate for the loss which would accrue for the reasons he had already stated. That part of the instruction had been completely misunderstood by the London County Council. It was only to provide that where a slaughtered cow was proved not to have tuberculosis some additional compensation should be given to the owner.

Then there was the case of the man who had to keep up a certain herd in order to carry out his contracts, and he might be called upon, at a moment's notice, to buy cows in place of those slaughtered, though quite healthy, at a high price, which might be of no use to him when he got them, and there was that loss also to be taken into consideration. Under all these circumstances it was only reasonable when it was proved that a slaughtered cow was not suffering from tuberculosis that the farmer should have some further compensation, and all the Instruction asked was for a sum not exceeding 50 per cent. of the market value. The County Council stated that his Instruction asked for 50 per cent. in addition, but it was not so; that was the maximum. It was limited to that for the benefit of the County Council. He would be perfectly prepared to accept 20 or 25 per cent. or even less as a limit; all he wanted was the principle accepted; all that the agriculturists asked for was something more than the actual market value of the cows at the date they were slaughtered if found to be healthy. The amount involved was, after all, very small. The total number of cows kept in the county of London was only 4,700, and that amount was annually decreasing owing to the County Council refusing licences, and supposing 1 per cent. of those cows when slaughtered were found not to be suffering from tuberculosis of the udder, and the whole 50 per cent. additional compensation were paid, it would only amount to £407, and while it would mean nothing to the County Council it was of vast importance to the dairymen, and would be to the farmers in other districts in which this principle might be adopted. As regarded the appointment of a valuer he understood that the London County Council were quite prepared to adopt the view of the Central Chamber of Agriculture that the valuer should be appointed by the Board of Agriculture instead of by themselves, and he would not now deal with that. He reminded the House that it was an uncertain question among the experts at the present time as to whether a cow suffering from tuberculosis of the udder could communicate tuberculosis to human beings. That was a question which had been referred to the Royal Commission appointed in 1901, which had not yet reported, but which was expected to report shortly, and under those circumstances it might not be unreasonable to ask the London County Council to wait until that question was decided. Cows had been accused of spreading disease from one place to another. As in the instance of the outbreak of scarlet fever at Hendon, it was attributed to a diseased cow, but that was proved to be false, and that scarlet-fever could not be originated by cows, but only transmitted through the milk being infected from contact with another human being having the fever. In the case of the outbreak of sore throat closely resembling diphtheria at Woking, which was alleged to be communicated by cows to human beings, it was conclusively proved that nothing of the kind occurred, but that what happened in that case was that the milk was contaminated by the farmer and his family, who were suffering from the exact kind of sore throat which was epidemic at Woking. The proof that the outbreak of sore throat was not caused by the milk was the farmer and his family did not drink the milk which was supposed to have caused it, and it had been only transmitted through the milk from one human being to another.

The Central Chamber of Agriculture were most anxious to do everything in their power to assist the County Council in this matter, but they thought there ought to be fair and adequate compensation. Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench seemed to be very much amused at the way in which he was trying to defend the agricultural interest in that matter, but was it not a strange commentary on the present neglect of the Government of the agricultural interest that, although there was a Board of Agriculture, it had been left to a private Member to watch the agricultural interest? The hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, who represented the Board in that House, was merely the phonograph of the Board, the President of which unfortunately sat in the other House.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is hardly relevant to the Instruction now under discussion.

*SIR EDWARD STRACHEY said he only introduced the topic by way of illustration and in order to show why a private Member was performing a duty which properly devolves on a member of the Government, owing to the President of the Board of Agriculture not being a Member of the House of Commons. This was a question of far-reaching importance, affecting every farmer and every agriculturist, and the representative of the Board of Agriculture should have taken it up and spoken with authority on it, instead of leaving it to a private Member. He begged to move:

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to insert provisions in the Bill to provide that a cow suspected of suffering from tuberculosis of the udder may be removed, and that a sample of such cow's milk shall be submitted before slaughter to the medical officer of health for the county for bacteriological examination, and to provide, if this examination shows evidence that the cow is so diseased, that the animal shall be slaughtered in the presence of and examined by a veterinary surgeon appointed in the way proposed in Subsection (2) of Clause 34; and to provide that if, on examination, the veterinary surgeon certifies that such cow was not suffering from tuberculosis of the udder, the council shall pay, in addition to the compensation provided for in sub Section (3) of Clause 34, a sum not exceeding 50 per cent. of the full value of such cow immediately before slaughter, as special damages for loss of such cow; to provide that, if the veterinary surgeon certifies that the cow was so diseased, the council shall pay compensation in the manner provided by Part (a), Sub-section (3), of Section 14 of the Diseases of Animals Act, 1894, and that the council shall also bear half of the reasonable costs incurred in carrying out the purposes of Clause 34; and to provide that the value of a cow slaughtered by the council, whether diseased or not, shall be assessed by a valuer appointed by the Board of Agriculture, and not by a veterinary surgeon."—(*Sir Edward Strachey.*)

*SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (Wigtonshire) said he had listened with the greatest interest to the speech of the hon. Member, firstly, because he represented an agricultural constituency, secondly, because he was a London ratepayer, and thirdly, because he had the honour of being the Chairman of the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis of 1898. He sympathised with the objects of the hon. Baronet, but he could not help thinking that the speech was made under a misapprehension. He had spoken of cows suspected of tuberculosis. It was a technical subject; but he might say that there was a great difference between generalised tuberculosis and localised tuberculosis. The hon. Baronet did not seem to have realised that tuberculosis of the udder was one of the rarest forms of the disease in cows. It was not until the disease had become generalised that it appeared in the udder, and it could then easily be recognised by anyone skilled in veterinary science. Therefore there was no question of suspecting a cow of having tuberculosis of the udder. The hon. Member had spoken of the hardship inflicted on a farmer by suddenly having three or four of his cows taken and slaughtered. Could he cite a single instance in which that had occurred?

*SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: Does the right hon. Baronet say it is impossible?

*SIR HERBERT MAXWELL would not commit himself to that, but he declared that such a case was unheard of. The Commissioners made most careful inquiry and never heard the slightest doubt thrown by anyone on the perfect certainty with which tuberculosis of the udder could be recognised.

AN HON. MEMBER: How?

*SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said he was not a veterinary surgeon. He was only stating the impression left on his mind by the expert evidence before the Commission. He admitted that it would be a great hardship if a farmer had three or four cows taken from his dairy and slaughtered, but compulsory power to slaughter was only given when the disease of the udder existed, and a case in which three or four cows were suffering from tuberculosis of the udder was unheard of. Therefore he could not understand why the hon. Baronet took such extreme objection to Clause 34.

*SIR EDWARD STRACHEY said he did so at the unanimous request of the Council of the Central Chamber of Agriculture.

*SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said the interruption of the hon. Baronet showed he was not conversant with the subject he was talking about. It was rash to assume from Professor Koch's change of front that there was no danger of infection from the interchange of the tubercular disease between bovine animals and man. That question was *sub judice*, and they should not anticipate the verdict by declaring that there was no risk of infection. A very small percentage of cows exhibited tubercular disease in the udder, and, as the disease was easily recognised when it appeared in that organ, there was small risk of the slaughter of a cow on mistaken grounds.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said the speech of the hon. and learned Baronet——

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: I am not "learned."

MR. JOHN BURNS said the learned speech of the hon. Baronet, which certainly entitled him to that distinction, had proved conclusively that this was not a subject which the House of Commons could adequately discuss. He had risen mainly in order to deny that the London County Council had taken up a *non possumus* attitude in this matter. Immediately that body found it necessary in the discharge of its statutory and sanitary obligations to 5,000,000 of people who wished to have pure milk, which was beneficial alike to town and country, they introduced these clauses into their General Powers Bill. The hon. Baronet promptly gave notice of the Instruction, which at once received most careful consideration at the hands of the County Council Committee and officials. Instead of the County Council having been peremptory and discourteous, the contrary was the case. When the Dairymen's Association asked for a *locus* the authorities of the House declined to recognise it, but the County Council took no objection to the application. They contended, however, that the House of Commons was not the proper tribunal to go into these scientific details, but that they should be considered by a Committee. The County Council had inserted clauses providing that if after examination the veterinary surgeon certified that a cow was not infected, the County Council should pay to the owner the full value of the cow before it was removed for slaughter, as certified by such veterinary surgeon, as well as the reasonable cost of any independent veterinary surgeon employed for the purposes of the section; while if after examination the animal was certified to be suffering from tuberculosis, the Council should pay such damage the owner might have sustained from the removal or slaughter of the cow as the veterinary surgeon should certify, together with half the reasonable cost of an independent veterinary surgeon. He contended that these clauses met every reasonable case, and if there was any suspicion that they did not, the Committee upstairs would exercise their discretion and make them reasonable and fair. They all knew how some years since in a hunting country it was found that farmers bought chickens at 1s. each and charged the hunt 2s. 6d. or 3s. for them. Well, they must protect London against tubercular dumping of a like character.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) said that in the past he had been opposed to the London County Council. On this occasion, however, he supported its action. The agricultural industry was not accustomed to be treated with the lavish generosity suggested by the hon. Baronet, a generosity which, in view of the approaching general election, might be looked upon with some suspicion. This proposal, if accepted, would apply to Essex as well as to London. No one would deny that a man who had a cow in full milk was entitled to compensation if the animal were slaughtered in the public interest. He could certainly not support compensation up to 50 per cent., as suggested by the hon. Baronet. If the farmers got it, it would only make them unpopular, and, after all, as the farmer paid the rates, it would be merely putting the money in his pocket with one hand and taking it out with the other. Compensation was a two-edged sword. It was well known that in the case of swine fever, the disease had in many instances been induced in order to obtain compensation. He would be perfectly ready to accept the suggestion with regard to 10 per cent., but to propose 50 per cent. would do more harm than good.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) said he would like to say a word from the public health point of view. He admired the consistency with which the hon. Member for Somersetshire continually advocated the interest of the agricultural persons affected by Bills like tho present one. The House had had on this occasion exceptional advantages in forming a conclusion. They had had valuable information from the chairman of the Commission on Tuberculosis, who probably more than any man in England outside the veterinary profession knew this subject thoroughly. The whole tendency of his speech was to indicate that this was a matter to be sent to a Committee, and there investigated with expert evidence before them. While tuberculosis in this country was being lessened in every other direction, Sir R. Thorne Thorne, late Principal Medical Officer of the Local Government Board, had shown that it had been increasing among young children, and in his opinion that was largely due to the fact that there was a considerable amount of contaminated milk sold. It was only when tuberculosis affected the udder of the cow that there was direct contamination of the milk. When such a thing happened it was the duty of every public authority to try and stop the dissemination of such a serious disease, and he urged upon the House the advisability of sending the question to a Committee, where the whole matter could be investigated. His belief was that tuberculosis could be transmitted from the cow to the human subject, and that Professor Koch's case was not proved. Having regard to the assurance of the hon. Member for Battersea that the County Council were anxious to deal generously with owners of cows affected, he hoped the course he had suggested would be adopted.

Mr. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.) said that when he saw the proposed Instruction on the Paper he determined to vote in its favour, because it embodied a principle for which he had always contended, viz., that private property should not be taken away to secure a public benefit without compensation being granted. He could not help realising, however, that the case of the hon. Baronet opposite had been completely demolished by the hon. Member for Wigton. Even if that were not the case, there was the further consideration urged by the hon. Member for Battersea that a matter of this kind should be dealt with by a general Bill applicable to the whole of the country, so that the same conditions would apply all round. Therefore, much as he would like to vote for the principle of compensation, he felt compelled to withhold his support from the proposed Instruction.

*The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES (Mr. J. W. Lowther, Cumberland, Penrith) said there was a further reason why this Bill should follow the ordinary course and go before the Committee upstairs. The Police and Sanitary Committee, by whom the Bill would be considered, was specially qualified for dealing with these matters, having often had questions of the same character to deal with. If the example of the London County Council was followed by other municipalities, as it probably would be, it would be extremely desirable that a set of clauses should be drawn up in the first instance to stand as a precedent for those other municipalities. It was impossible for the House to consider the matter in all its aspects and draw up a clause satisfactory to all parties and one which would remain for a considerable time suitable for insertion in all similar Bills. The Police and Sanitary Committee would be entitled to call before them representatives of the Board of Agriculture and of the Local Government Board, and thus would be able to give the subject much fuller and more mature consideration than could be given by the House at large.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) expressed his entire agreement with the views put forward by the hon. Member for Wigton, and the hope that the proposed Instruction would be withdrawn. He had come down with the intention of supporting the proposal, but, after listening to the speeches of the hon. Baronet opposite and the hon. Member for Battersea, he, like an honest man, was prepared to change his opinion. He had long fought for the principle that when anything was confiscated for the public good, the public purse should pay for it, and that principle was recognised in the Bill. He did not agree with compensation up to 50 per cent. additional to the value of the animal being given. The County Council were prepared to act not only justly but generously, and he hoped, therefore, the Instruction would be withdrawn.

Sir MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire) was understood to ask whether the Committee would have power so to amend the Bill as to increase the value placed on the animal. If so, they would be able to grant an additional sum so that the owner would not be the loser.

Mr. PARKER SMITH (Lanarkshire, Partick) remarked that after a discussion on a kindred subject before the referee to-day they had found themselves unable to give a *locus* to the Metropolitan Dairymen's Association upon clauses of this kind. He would like an assurance that the London County Council would not take any technical objection of that kind.

Mr. JOHN BURNS said the County Council offered no objection to the *locus* of the Dairymen's Association, or anybody else who was reasonably interested in this important matter.

*Mr. BEAUMONT (Northumberland, Hexham) said that, as Chairman of the Central Chamber of Agriculture, he desired strongly to support the proposed instruction. The Chamber of Agriculture were not animated by political motives in this matter as had been suggested by the hon. Member for Essex (in fact, any political views the Chamber might have would, he thought, be the same as the hon. Member's); their reason for objecting to the matter going upstairs was that they had not the money to brief counsel, as the County Council were able to do out of the rates. With regard to compensation, they would be prepared to accept 10 per cent.

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.) was entirely in favour of the principle of the Instruction, but was opposed to excessive compensation. The interest of the whole community was of much more importance than the interest of one individual. He thought the local authority ought not only to slaughter a diseased cow, but also to take action against a man who, knowing a cow to be diseased, distributed the milk he obtained irom it.

*Mr. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) desired, as a former Chairman of the Central Chamber of Agriculture, to dissociate himself from the Instruction. He regretted that he could not support his hon. friend in this matter; the proposals of the clause were even more moderate than the recommendations of the Commission. It was the interest of farmers to help to eliminate the disease, while those proposals would tend to increase the number of diseased animals. He thought agriculturists were very ill-advised to advance claims of this kind, which would imperil their legitimate grievances receiving proper consideration

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 57; Noes 197. (Division List No. 49.)

AYES.

Allen, Charles P.
Arrol, Sir William
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bignold, Arthur
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H.A.E.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Davenport, William Bromley
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir John E.
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Gordon, Maj Evans-(T'r H'mlets
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Gretton, John
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Helder, Augustus
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Keswick, William
Lambert, George
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Fredk. G.
Mooney, John J.
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Plummer, Walter R.
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Randles, John S.
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Edward Strachey and Mr. Gardner.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Ainsworth, John Sterling
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bigwood, James
Black, Alexander William
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boland, John
Bond, Edward
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cremer, William Randal
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cullinan, J.
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)

Dickson, Charles Scott
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duncan, J. Hastings
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Edwards, Frank
Emmott, Alfred
Farrell, James Patrick
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Garfit, William
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Groves, James Grimble
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hamilton, Marq of(L'nd'nderry
Hammond, John
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton(Tynem'th)
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kilbride, Denis
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Lloyd-George, David
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, Rt Hn JW(Cum, Penr.
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Lundon, W.
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Maxwell, RtHn Sir H.E.(Wigt'n
Maxwell, W.J.H. (Dumfriessh.
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moore, William
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murphy, John
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicholson, William Graham
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James(Wicklow, W.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James(Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, Herbert Pike(Darlington
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Power, Patrick Joseph
Purvis, Robert
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Reid, James (Greenock)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Shackleton, David James
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C.R(Northants
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Ure, Alexander
Valentia, Viscount
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, H(Ashton und. Lyne)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E.R(Bath
Woodhouse, SirJ T.(Huddersf'd
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. John Burns and Mr. Lough.

SUPPLY [2ND ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,746,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of His Majesty's Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

*MR. NANNETTI, resuming his speech, said that several houses in Ireland were prepared to offer reasonable facilities for supplying the Army with military outfits. The effect of issuing the circular to which he had already referred was to immediately stop what had been up to that time the trade of military tailors in Ireland, and as a consequence many orders were countermanded. It might be said that this circular was only intended to be in the nature of a recommendation, but that was not the way in which it was accepted by the various commanders throughout Ireland, and he would show to the Committee the effect it had upon these officers. The Commander of the Connaught Rangers had always taken a particular interest in the development of Irish industries and of the national language, and he was not likely to take a step that would have destroyed one of the few trades left to Ireland. This circular was intended only to deal with cash prices. The Adjutant of the Connaught Rangers was immediately ordered to send out the following circular memorandum—

> "The Commanding Officer has made the following decisions with regard to tailors and uniform. The following are to be dealt with for: Head-gear — Cates; overalls — Tantz of Oxford Street; other uniforms—Jones, Chalk, and Dawson, Sackville Street, London. Khaki will entirely be made by the sergeant master tailors, and a supply of cloth will be purchased, but every officer is to provide himself with one complete suit, which shall include knicker breeches and a pair of trousers. Messrs. Jones, Chalk, and Dawson, will be instructed as to the cut and pattern by the second in command immediately. The following points require the attention of officers; The mess jackets are to be made with shoulder straps of green cloth, and the roll collar of green poplin; no gold cording or buttons are to be attached to jacket. The jacket is to be made of serge and not of cloth. Boots for khaki dress are to be brown with plain toe-caps. For overalls ordinary Wellington greatcoat. Khaki is to be got by officers. Frock coat: officers must provide themselves with either the frock coat or the old serge jacket for courts-martial. Brown belts to be got at Jones, Chalk, and Dawson's. Servants' livery and blazer sashes and regimental ties are to be purchased from Flight, of Winchester. Linen collars for mess are to be of the kind that stand up all round, and when on to lap one end over the other.
>
> By Order,
> L. J. CONRY,
> Adjutant 1st Connaught Rangers."

The circular of the Commander-in-Chief proved that it was not the intention of the Commander-in-Chief that such an order as that should have been given, but the effect of that memorandum had been to compel the officers of the various regiments to send their regimental orders to London. He could not understand why hon. Members should not assist him in putting a stop to this kind of thing, and he asked the Secretary of State for War to have that order withdrawn. He had reason for believing that the ex-Secretary for War and the present Financial Secretary to the War Office did not agree with that order, which had created wide-spread discontent in Ireland.

The hon. Member for the St. Patrick's Division of Dublin had been interviewed by the master tailors upon this question, and the workmen had called attention to it as well as the Trades Congress. He had also brought it before the notice of the Secretary for War, and still this grievance had not been redressed. He should always feel it his duty to call attention to these matters, and to insist upon justice being done in a question of this kind. It was not only the cash system, but a cash and credit system, and at present there was no possibility of manufacturers in Ireland competing. He would not go so far as to say that these goods should, as a matter of right, be bought in Ireland, but surely the people of that country had a right to compete, and officers ought not to be tyrannised over by any adjutant saying that they should go to some particular firms in London and Winchester. He asked hon. Members to stand by him in this matter, because it was a question that affected the artisans of Ireland. He had received a very strong resolution from Belfast upon this matter, and he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman who represented Belfast to do justice in this matter. He was not asking that an order should be placed with any tailor who was not prepared to give the official cut and what was required by the Army, but he asked that such a circular as that which had been sent out should receive the condemnation of the War Office and be immediately withdrawn. A young officer had sent to him a list of the cash and credit prices for a few of the articles required by officers, which clearly proved that the intention of the Commander-in-Chief had been abused, for it was never his intention that young officers should not be protected from extravagant prices. When the circular was sent out why were Irish firms not asked to compete? When he first brought this matter before the House, he was told that this had been done, but he had since consulted several master tailors and workmen's associations, and he could not find anything of the kind had been done. Surely they could afford to treat the trade of Ireland fairly in this matter without using the influence of the War Office to bring their trade over into this country. To show the extent to which this scandal had gone on, he would read to the Committee a list of the various regiments which had been called upon to deal with certain English firms. They were as follows—

"Connaught Rangers—Messrs. Jones, Chalk, and Dawson, London; and Messrs. Cates, London. Royal Irish Fusiliers—Messrs. Hawkes, London; and Messrs. Cates, London. Inniskilling Fusiliers—Messrs. Flight, Winchester. Dublin Fusiliers—Messrs. Flight, Winchester. Munster Fusiliers—Messrs. Flight, Winchester. Royal Irish Regiment—Messrs. Hawkes, London. Leinster Regiment—Messrs. Hawkes, London. Army Medical—Messrs. Johnston, Dublin, or Messrs. Hawkes or Holt, London."

Even the Warwicks were recommended to deal with an English firm, and so were the Royal Engineers. When they considered the whole host of Irish regiments, was it not ridiculous that there was only one Dublin firm mentioned, and that firm only when sandwiched between two English firms? He thought it was a scandal, and he was surprised at the War Office not taking action after their attention had been drawn to the matter. He had sent letters to various representatives at the War Office and asked that this thing should be altered, in order that he should not take up the time of the House with the subject, but nothing had been done. They could get nothing for Ireland, although they had to pay a large sum towards the upkeep of the Army. Not one penny of the money voted in the Army Estimates would be left in Ireland if it could possibly be taken away.

In the case of one young officer in Ireland who joined the Army, the first thing he did was to go to his tailor in Dublin, where he gave an order for a military outfit. When the outfit was sent home to him he was told that it was not the official cut and that it had not been purchased from Hawkes, of London, and the result was that the uniform was not paid for, and the matter had to be brought into court. A suspicion had been aroused that somebody was getting a commission upon these orders sent to London, and he thought it was necessary to take steps that would put an end to suspicions of that character. From the inquiries he had made amongst master tailors he was satisfied that the work could not only be done as well, but it could be done cheaper in Ireland. What he asked for was that officers in His Majesty's service should be at liberty to deal with any firm they liked. Formerly all this kind of work went to the merchant tailors of Dublin, Belfast, and Cork. What was the necessity for the change? Why should young officers be compelled to come to London tailors? There was too little work in Ireland, and they could not afford to allow a single thing to be taken away from them in the way he had described. He was sure that the representative of the War Office would not say that he was putting an unreasonable demand before the Committee. He represented a constituency of working men in Dublin, and when their interests were assailed in this way he would bring the case before Parliament. But he did not speak in the interest only of working men because they supported him. He spoke also on behalf of the merchant tailors in his constituency, and he was sure they would not give him a vote. He had a letter in his hand stating that the English firms who did this work did not pay the recognised rate of wages, and that a great deal of the work was done in sweating dens. Was that a condition of things the War Office would tolerate? When he brought this matter before the right hon. Gentleman the other day the answer given was, that this was a question of private money, and that the War Office had no right to interfere with it. It appeared to him that it was an infringement of the fair wages Resolution passed by the House, and in cases of this kind they were entitled to protest against the way the work was being done. He hoped he had stated a fair case, and all that he asked was that justice should be done. He moved a reduction of item A by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Pay, etc. of General Staff) be reduced by £1,000." — (*Mr. Nannetti.*)

MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.) said his knowledge of the matter was gathered from what he had read in the papers. He had no merchant tailors in his constituency, and, therefore, he was absolutely impartial on the question. He thought if hon. Members knew the actual position, they would not be prepared to ratify without consideration the treatment which the War Office had extended to Irish merchant tailors. It seemed to him that this was really a hard case. Why should it be necessary that officers in the Connaught Rangers should get their uniforms in London? There ought to be some reason for it, but no reason had been given. From the correspondence it appeared that there was no Order on the subject, and that young officers merely acted on the advice of the adjutant The weight which advice carried with it depended very much on the quarter from which the advice came. In this connection when a young officer was told by the adjutant to get his uniform from an English firm the advice, he thought, almost amounted to a suggestion accompanied by sanction. It was not fair that men who joined His Majesty's service should not have the choosing of the tailor who was to supply their uniforms, and that he should be directed to a London firm to the exclusion of Irish firms. There was no reason why Irish merchant tailors should be excluded from competing.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield) said he sympathised with the hon. Member who moved the reduction in the general views he had put forward. He felt most strongly that it was most desirable that the people of a district should feel that they were materially benefited by troops being quartered in their district. So far as contracts were concerned, he should prefer that they should be given locally. That was a matter of general principle, the only qualification being that there must be due regard for economic consideration in the interest of the whole body of the people. But this was not a question of contract at all. It had been felt that the Army was a profession too exclusively reserved for rich men. Many endeavours, therefore, had been made to meet the difficulties of young officers on joining these regiments, and particularly efforts had been made to ensure that they knew where they could obtain uniforms in the cheapest market. If Irish firms had not been invited to send in prices, it was a regrettable mistake, but one already corrected. They were now invited, and had availed themselves of the invitation. Commanding officers had been informed that there was in the War Office a list of firms, with the prices at which they were willing to supply uniforms. There was no compulsion on the part of the War Office. He absolutely denied that the War Office had, in any way, interfered with the right of young officers to deal with any firms they pleased. He was not prepared to interfere with mere advice of commanding officers, but advice amounting to a direction or an order would be highly improper.

MR. NANNETTI said he was sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but he wished to call his attention to the order issued by the adjutant of the Connaught Rangers directing officers to deal with particular firms.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said the hon. Member had called attention to that already. In answer to a Question on the subject the Secretary of State for War stated that in 1903 in a particular instance a commanding officer gave an order to a young officer to obtain his uniform from a particular firm, and that instructions had been sent forbidding any such action on the part of the commanding officer, and hon. Members were invited to draw the War Secretary's attention to any other cases which came to their knowledge. This attitude on the part of the War Office ought to be satisfactory to the hon. Member. He could not undertake to control the advice given by commanding officers, but when it came to be an order of the character indicated it would be dealt with by the Secretary of State in the same manner as in the case of the Connaught Rangers. He was sorry that the hon. Gentleman should have referred to an unnamed regiment and imputed most discreditable action to certain officers. He could not accept without any substantiation at all the very discreditable imputation that officers had received commission in respect of uniforms ordered. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would not press that matter further.

MR. NANNETTI said he distinctly stated that he did not make the statement on his own authority. He quoted a report which appeared in the Press of the proceedings which took place before a judge in reference to the matter. He had endeavoured not to make any imputation. He had no idea of making reflections on officers which he could not substantiate.

Mr. BROMLEY-DAVENPORT said he was sorry he did not notice that the hon. Member was quoting a newspaper report.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said the hon. Gentleman had stated it would be well that the supplies required for the troops in Ireland should be obtained in the various districts where they were stationed, due regard being paid to considerations of economy. He wished to call the attention of the Committee to the fact that Scotch porter was being consumed in canteens not many furlongs from Guinness's brewery. He could not understand why that porter should be imported. He complained that there was practically a boycott of Irish manufacturers and tradesmen by the War Office and other Departments, and asked why a depôt for military stores was not established in Dublin.

Major EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said that the position seemed to be that a list of tailors who would supply uniforms at a cheap rate was submitted by the War Office to the commanding officers of regiments, and that the adjutant chose one of those tailors, and advised young officers to go to that particular establishment. A number of Irish regiments had been referred to in which young officers had been advised to get their uniforms from English firms, and in only one case had an Irish tailor been recommended. That course of proceeding had created the suspicion which had given rise to all the ill-feeling. He suggested that instead of sending the list of firms to the adjutants of regiments it should be handed to the young officers themselves, or their parents; that Irish tailors should be included in the list; and that the officers or their parents should be left with absolute freedom of choice.

Mr. BROADHURST (Leicester) said he could assure the hon. Member for College Green Division that he had the hearty and undivided support of the British workmen in his desire that Irish workmen should have a fair share of the work to be done for the public service of this country. He did not think that any man could charge his hon. friend in making that claim with having appealed to any Party prejudice. His hon. friend distinctly disclaimed making such an appeal, and had put his case with great moderation, lucidity, and marked success. The Financial Secretary to the War Office had not met the whole case put forward by his hon. friend. The hon. Gentleman, as he understood him, said that the War Office was not immediately responsible for some of the circulars which had been issued, such as "Brown belts to be got at Jones';" but officers in His Majesty's service did sign circulars advising young officers where to go to get their clothing.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: What regiment?

Mr. BROADHURST said that the circular from which he had quoted was signed "L. J. Conroy, Adjutant of 1st Connaught Rangers," and it was distinctly marked with official authority. What his hon. friend wanted was that means should be adopted to prevent what appeared to sensible and ordinary people to be touting in favour of certain firms outside Ireland; and he thought it was a disgrace if the action of any officer in His Majesty's Service could be reasonably open to the charge of touting for London tailors. The inevitable construction of that was that such officers would not do it unless they themselves received some benefit from it. [Cries of "Oh, oh!"] He did not himeslf believe that; but he maintained that it was naturally open to that construction by suspicious people; and the War Office should take steps to make any such misconception in the minds of any people impossible. He submitted that the case applied not only to uniforms but to every article of clothing; and that the young officer should get his golfing and shooting suits from the firms suggested by the commanding officer. He was not unmindful of the grace added to the figure of young officers by their tailor, and he had often admired them when they were artistically attired, but the choice of tailor should be left to the private decision of each officer, and no one should be subjected to any influence to go to a particular firm. Military success did not depend on the fit of a uniform to satisfy the taste of an officer in command of a regiment. The possibilities were that the great majority of the best paid cutters in London were Irishmen, and he was perfectly satisfied that as good work could be obtained in turning out uniforms from the tailors of Dublin, Belfast, and Cork as in London. He had a letter from the Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Tailors of Great Britain, in which he believed Ireland was included, which stated that some orders from Ireland had been placed with a particular firm inLondon which was paying under the standard rate of wages fixed by the London Society. That was a state of things that should not be tolerated, and it was only reasonable that public work should be placed with firms which recognised the usual wages paid in the trade, and other conditions pertaining thereto. He thought his hon. friend had made out a perfectly good case, which had not been met by the Financial Secretary to the War Office.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that there had been a misconception in this case. It was not a question of public contract at all, but of individual purchases by individual officers out of their own money for their own use. It was the duty of the War Office to see that the regulations as to uniforms were observed, and that important duty was deputed to the commanders of regiments; but it was not within the province of the War Office to dictate to officers how they should spend their money, or where they should buy their clothes. The hon. Member wanted to go a step further, and say that senior officers ought not to give any advice to their juniors. Such an undertaking on his part would be absolutely futile; but he would undertake that no pressure of the kind alluded to should be allowed again. The War Office had endeavoured to make the list as open as they reasonably could.

Mr. NANNETTI said that after the sympathetic answer he had received from the right hon. Gentleman he would accept his assurance, and asked leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said that on Tuesday last he had brought before the notice of the Secretary for War the grave anomaly of the position of the Judge-Advocate General, and no notice had been taken of his statement.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he would be perfectly prepared to discuss this question on a more appropriate occasion.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL said he accepted the right hon. Gentleman's assurance.

Mr. FIELD said that the Financial Secretary to the War Office had not taken notice of his request for the establishment of a depôt for military stores in Dublin.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said that there were considerations opposed to the establishment of such a depôt, which would far outweigh its advantages, apart altogether from the question of cost of the staff.

Mr. FIELD asked if the hon. Gentleman would kindly give him a conference on the matter.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT was understood to assent.

Mr. TOMKINSON (Cheshire, Crewe) said that they were at a little disadvantage from the fact that the last Report on Military Prisons was two years old. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War would be able to assure the Committee that the degrading and brutalising punishment of flogging was entirely obsolete in military prisons.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he could assure the hon. Gentleman that he was entirely sympathetic with him in this matter, and that he would take every step to prevent soldier prisoners from being punished in that manner. He appealed to the Committee that as there had been now four days' discussion on the general question, he hoped that the Committee would allow the Vote to be taken now.

MR. SECRETARY ARNOLD-FORSTER rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but the Chairman withheld his assent, and declined then to put that question.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said that he had had no answer to his question as to the number of generals on the establishment. There was an enormous expenditure on the pay of those generals, and some effect should be given to economy in that direction. He moved the reduction of the Vote by £5,000.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said, in answer to the hon. Member for Lichfield, that the matter was under consideration.

MR. SECRETARY ARNOLD-FORSTER rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

MR. COURTENAY WARNER, seated, and with his hat on, said—On the point of order, Mr. Chairman, I moved a reduction.

*THE CHAIRMAN: It was not put.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said that, as the Secretary for War made a short speech before moving the Closure, there had been time for his reduction to be put.

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided: Ayes, 128; Noes, 87. (Division List No. 50.)

AYES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Chapman, Edward
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir Jn. Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt.Hn.Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hn. G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Meysey-Thomson, Sir H. M.
Milner, Rt.Hn. Sir Frederick G.
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)

Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Rt.Hon.Lord (Lancs.)
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt.Hn.SirWilliam H.
Welby,Sir Charles G.E.(Notts.)
Whiteley,H.(Ashton und. Lyne
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Black, Alexander William
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Devlin,CharlesRamsay(Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dobbie Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Edwards, Frank
Farrell, James Patrick
Ffrench, Peter
Field William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Hammond, John
Hayden, John Patrick
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Horniman, Frederick John
Joicey, Sir James
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien,Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor,James (Wicklow,W.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly,James(Roscommon,N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Soares, Ernest J.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Warner and Mr. Charles Hobhouse

Question put accordingly, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,746,000, be granted to His Majesty to defray the Charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of His Majesty's Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1905."

The Committee divided: Ayes 134, Noes 75. (Division List No. 51.)

AYES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, AugustusHenryEden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.HughO.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon.SirH.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Campbell,J.H.M.(Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C.W.(Derbyshire
Chamberlain,Rt.Hn.J.A(Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb,SirJohn Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin

Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Edwards, Frank
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, HnG. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop)
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, A. Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N. R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Manners, Lord Cecil
Markham, Arthur Basil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick G.
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Waltamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, RtHn A. Graham (Bute
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W (Liverpool
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stock, James Henry
Strachey, Sir Edward
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Black, Alexander William
Brigg, John
Burke, E. Haviland
Caldwell, James
Channing, Francis Allston
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cremer, William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry.
Delany, William
Devlin, Charles Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Farrell, James Patrick
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Hammond, John
Hayden, John Patrick
Helme, Norval Watson
Horniman, Frederick John
Joicey, Sir James
Joyce, Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Soares, Ernest J.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr).
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whitley and Mr. Henderson.

And, it being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

Adjourned at twenty-two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 11th March, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Gosport Water Bill [H.L.]. A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Preston and Blackburn Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Preston and Lytham Tramways and Tramroad Bill [H.L.]. Leave given to the Select Committee not to sit on Monday next until Two o'clock.

Marylebone Chapels (St. James', Westmorland Street) Bill [H.L.]. Presented (pursuant to leave given yesterday), and read 1ª.

Minehead Urban District Council Water Bill [H.L.]. The Lord Balfour informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The order made on the 19th of February last, discharged, and Bill committed.

Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway Bill [H.L.]; King's College Hospital Bill [H.L.]; Great Yarmouth Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order), and committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 28th of February and 3rd of March last, discharged, and Bill committed.

Metropolitan Railway Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 22nd of February and 3rd of March last, discharged, and Bill committed for Tuesday next.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY (GUNNERY).

Results of prize-firing in His Majesty's Fleet, 1903.

CYPRUS.

Report for 1902–3.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES) (VISITING COMMITTEES).

Draft Rules proposed to be made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, under the Prisons Acts, 1877 and 1898, with respect to the constitution of the Visiting Committee of—Brixton Prison; Winchester Prison.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILL.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the law relating to justices of the peace, with respect to residence, to qualification of solicitors, and to the removal of ex-officio justices—Was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª, to be printed, and to be read 2ª on Tuesday next. (No. 30.)

House adjourned at Twenty-five Minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 11th March, 1904.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (PETITIONS FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION) (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for additional Provision in the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—St. Marylebone Electric

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Lighting Bill. Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Hampton-in-Arden Gas Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill. As amended, to be considered upon Monday next.

Felixstowe Gas Bill; Gomersal Gas Bill; Wellington (Somerset) Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Norwich Water Bill. Reported, with an Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY BILL.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said that he had given notice on the Paper of an Instruction to the Committee on this Bill which he did not wish to move, but he might be permitted to give his reasons for placing that Instruction on the Paper and withdrawing it. His Instruction was intended to secure some change in the receiving houses of the railway companies in London. Everybody knew that these had become a great nuisance in London. For instance, in Regent Circus they blocked the thoroughfare. The object of his Instruction was that the railway companies should do what was done by many private companies, viz., provide covered ways for the transfer of the goods so as to avoid the existing nuisance to the public. That seemed to him obviously right and proper. He, however, was given to understand that that part of the clause of the Bill applicable to this point was to be struck out in another place and therefore it would not be necessary to move his Instruction.

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

Petition from Camberwell, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCE HOLDERS.

Petition from Leath Ward, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of law: from Middlewich; Wiltshire; Shaftesbury; Galston; Wakefield; Berkeley; Monkwearmouth; North Shields; Morecambe; Thornhill; Alresford; Needham Market; Bridgwater; Hammersmith; Sheffield; Heckmondwike; Maentwog; Isaf; and Liverpool; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES BILL.

Petitions in favour: from Corwen; and Bristol; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.

Petitions against: from Edinburgh; Clacton-on-Sea; Cheltenham; Brentford; Nottingham; Shepherd's Bush; Highbury; Islington; Herne Bay; High Wycombe; Watford; Southsea; Southwark; Richmond; Soho; and Bridgwater; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES) (VISITING COMMITTEES).

Copy presented, of Draft Rules proposed to be made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department under the Prisons Acts, 1877 and 1898, with respect to the constitution of the Visiting Committee of Winchester Prison [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 94.]

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES) (VISITING COMMITTEES).

Copy presented, of Draft Rules proposed to be made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department under the Prisons Acts, 1877 and 1898, with respect to the constitution of the Visiting Committee of Winchester Prison [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 95.]

COAL EXPORTS, ETC.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 9th February; *Mr. D. A. Thomas*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 96.]

AMERICAN MAIL SERVICE.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 15th February; *Sir John Leng*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 97.]

LEAD POISONING IN EARTHENWARE AND CHINA WORKS.

Address for "Return of the cases of Lead Poisoning reported as occurring in China and Earthenware Works during the years 1899 to 1903, showing (1) the number of cases in the several classes of works and in the various processes, the number of persons employed, and the proportion of cases to persons employed; (2) the number of cases occurring in each month of the year; (3) particulars as to the character of the attacks; (4) the number of persons suspended in certain districts by the certifying surgeons (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 102, of Session 1903)."—(*Mr. Cochrane.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Royal Irish Constabulary—Crime Special Branch.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether there exists a branch of the Royal Irish Constabulary called the Crime Special; and, if so, what number of officers and men are attached to it, what allowance do they receive for this service, and under what circumstances is it retained.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) At head quarters the branch consists of a county inspector and district inspector with extra allowances of £250 and £150 a year, respectively, also a sergeant and an acting sergeant with a daily allowance of 1s. 6d. each. There are in addition forty-two men in counties and cities attached to the staff, each receiving the extra allowance of 1s. 6d. a day. The branch was formed for the purpose of criminal investigation and is retained with a like object.

India—Excess Amount Drawn from Home Charges.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for India what is the excess amount, up to date, drawn for Home Charges from India by Council Bills and Transfers, above the £17,619,300 as entered under that head in the Indian Government's Budget last March, and in what way is that excess being utilised or applied here, and will these excess drawings be treated in the Indian Budget, now nearly due, by way of deductions from the Home Charges Remittances in the ensuing year.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The sales of Council Bills and Transfers in 1903–4 have so far realised £22,600,000. Owing to the excess of this amount over the Budget Estimate it has been found possible (1) to invest in this country on behalf of the Gold Reserve Fund £2,200,000 more than the amount remitted from India in gold for that purpose; (2) to avoid a considerable portion of the borrowing in England by the Secretary of State in Council and on his guarantee which was contemplated when the Budget was prepared; (3) to increase the cash balances of the India Office. The amount of the drawings in each year is regulated mainly by the requirements of trade; and there is no intention of hampering trade by restricting the drawings in 1904–5 to any particular figure on account of the large remittances of 1903–4, but the possibility of a reduced trade demand in 1904–5 is being borne in mind in connection with the preparation of the coming Budget.

Education Act in Wales—Fixing of Appointed Day.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education when and for what date the appointed day under the Education Act, 1902, will be fixed for the county of Anglesey; and whether the Board of Education propose to further postpone the appointed day in those Welsh counties which have adopted the no control, no rate policy.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The Board are postponing the appointed day for Anglesey to 1st June in the first instance. A further postponement may subsequently be necessary. The reply to the last sentence is in the affirmative.

Adulterated Whisky.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the decision of the Justiciary Appeal Court of Scotland upholding a conviction of the Sheriffs' Court of Hamilton against a refreshment contractor, who sold as brandy a mixture into which patent spirit was blended; and whether, seeing that such a practice has been held to be contrary to the Food and Drugs Acts, the Government will cancel the regulations which forbid officers of Excise or Customs from interfering to prevent like frauds as to whisky being carried on in bonded warehouses, and allow official protests to take place.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) My attention had not been called to this case till the hon. and learned Member's Question appeared upon the Paper. I am making inquiries into the facts, and shall be obliged if the hon. Member will defer his Question till these inquiries are completed.

Sheriffs as Parliamentary Candidates.

MASTER OF ELIBANK (Edinburgh, Midlothian): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the conditions under which sheriffs to counties are appointed preclude them from becoming Parliamentary Candidates or appearing on political platforms, or whether there is any established usage against their so doing.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) A sheriff cannot become a Parliamentary Candidate, but, except in his own county, there is no reason against his appearing on a political platform in accordance with long established usage.

Procurators-Fiscal as Parliamentary Agents

MASTER OF ELIBANK: To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, seeing that his Department does not disapprove of clerks to county councils, who draw their salaries from public funds, acting for Parliamentary Candidates in a paid capacity, or otherwise engaging in politics, there is any objection to procurators-fiscal so acting.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) The hon. Member is aware that in answer to a Question last session he was informed that my Department has no control whatever over the clerks to county councils. The assumption on which his Question is based is therefore of his own invention. Procurators-fiscal are expressly prohibited by the Lord Advocate's regulations from acting as political agents.

Clerks to County Councils and Politics.

MASTER OF ELIBANK: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can obtain information as to whether clerks to county councils, who are salaried from public funds, are permitted to engage in politics in a paid capacity or otherwise.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I have no information on this subject, and it could only be obtained by means of applications to all the county councils. I am not aware of any sufficient reason for this being done.

Land Tax Remission.

MR. FREDERICK WILSON (Norfolk, Mid): To ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury whether he will explain on what grounds the Inland Revenue Commissioners omit to make the statutory deduction of one-sixth of the full annual value when assessing for land tax a dwelling house in a remission parish, seeing that by the Finance Act, 1896, provision is made for the assessment of land tax on the value as determined for the purpose of Schedule A in the Income-Tax Act, 1842, and by the latter Act a deduction of one-sixth of the full annual value is required to be made.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The deduction of one-sixth granted by Section 35 of the Finance Act of 1894 (not the Income-Tax Act of 1842), does not reduce the annual value for Income-Tax purposes, but is only an allowance made "for the purposes of collection" after the annual value of the property has been ascertained.

India—Education in Madras.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state what is the total number of male children of a schoolgoing age in the Presidency of Madras, and how many of such children are now receiving education; also whether he is aware that notwithstanding the fact that grants in aid were paid in full there were 21,561 fewer boys receiving instruction in lower primary schools in the Madras Presidency in the year 1902–3 than was the case in the year 1892–3; and whether he will urge the Government of Madras to take the necessary steps with a view to largely increase the number of primary vernacular schools with duly qualified teachers; whether he is aware that 56·4 per cent. of the teachers are persons not qualified under existing rules; and, if so, will he cause such teachers to be replaced by others possessing the necessary qualifications.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) According to the latest report received, the total number of male children of a schoolgoing age in the Madras Presidency is 2,826,295, of whom 565,217 or 20 per cent. were under instruction in public primary schools, 112,046 boys are returned as attending indigenous and private primary schools, making a total of 677,263 in the primary stage of instruction, or 24 per cent. of the number of boys of schoolgoing age. I find that in 1892–3 526,980 boys were receiving instruction in public primary schools (upper and lower), or in primary classes of secondary schools, which is not 21,561 more but 38,237 less than the number under similar instruction in 1902–3. My hon. friend has apparently taken the figures for "lower primary" schools exclusively, but I am not aware of any reason why "upper primary schools" should be excluded. The Government of India have frequently urged the extension of primary education, and are about to issue a general review of the state of education in India in which the point will again be strongly insisted on. In these circumstances I do not think it necessary to take any action in the matter. I am aware that the last Education Report for Madras shows 56·4 per cent. of the teachers, other than head masters, pandits, and special teachers, in primary schools as not fully qualified under the rules. This, however, does not mean that all of them were without qualifications. The substitution of fully certificated for less qualified teachers must be a gradual process, and the Report shows that the proportion of teachers not fully complying with the requirements of the rules has fallen from 58·8 per cent. in 1901–2 to 56·4 per cent. in 1902–3.

Aden Protectorate Disturbances.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has any information to give regarding alleged disturbances in the Aden Protectorate.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) There have been no disturbances in the Aden Protectorate, necessitating action on our part, since the measures taken in November last, which were reported in the newspapers at the time, to put an end to the interference by the Kotaibi with the communications between Aden and Dthali.

Irish Agricultural Department—Veterinary Branch.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if any decision has yet been arrived at with regard to the petition from the officers of the Veterinary Branch of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) No, Sir. The matter is before the Treasury, whose decision cannot be given until some further inquiries, now in progress, are completed.

Antrim Lunatic Asylum—Clothing Contracts.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the contracts for clothing in connection with the Antrim District Lunatic Asylum is limited to one firm in county Fermanagh, and will he make inquiries with the view of an opportunity being given to county Antrim manufacturers to place their products before the committee.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I am informed that the clothing contract for the asylum is held by a Belfast firm.

Irish Poor Law Commission on Union Amalgamation.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can see his way to make provision for the payment of the expenses of witnesses who are invited to give evidence before the Poor Law Commission inquiring into the case for the amalgamation of unions.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The sittings of the Commission are arranged so as to obviate tedious or irksome journeys by witnesses. They are nominated to appear before the Commission by local authorities, who generally defray their expenses. No change in the existing arrangements is called for.

Labourers' Cottage Schemes in County Wicklow.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the cause of the delay in building labourers' cottages in the townlands of Kilbaylet and Broomfield, county Wicklow, in regard to which the necessary preliminaries were complete in March, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Provisional Order for the erection of these cottages became absolute on the 30th November last, and a loan to carry out the scheme was sanctioned in December. No application has so far been made to the Local Government Board in respect of the appointment of an arbitrator.

Irish National Schools—Building Grants.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state when the applications from managers of national schools during several months past for aid towards building or reconstructing ordinary national schools will be finally dealt with by the Commissioners of National Education; and will he explain why the Commissioners continue year after year to lavish public money on subsidising unnecessary small schools, and on model schools, instead of helping the managers to meet the requirements of the ordinary national schools.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) In urgent cases the Commissioners have been prepared to allow the building of schools to proceed under the old regulations and on the old plans if the managers so desired. The Financial Secretary to the Treasury has already stated that a decision on the recommendations of the Committee on Building Grants would be deferred until the inquiry into the existing educational system in Ireland is completed. The Report on that inquiry, which deals, amongst other things, with the model schools, is at present engaging the consideration of Government.

Asiatic Labour in Rhodesia—Proposed Referendum.

Mr. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, before he gives his decision on the question of the importation of Asiatic labour into Rhodesia, he will, in view that a register of the colonists is available, submit this issue to them in the form of a referendum, as adopted by the Australian Colonies in the case of the Constitution of the Commonwealth.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) There is no provision in the Constitution of Southern Rhodesia for a referendum, nor, having regard to the fact that the Legislative Council contains elected members, is there, in my opinion, any necessity for resorting to a referendum.

Officers as Parliamentary Candidates.

MASTER OF ELIBANK: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state the regulations as to officers on the active list, in receipt of full pay, becoming prospective candidates for Parliament, or taking part in political meetings.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) Officers on full pay who are candidates for Parliament must, if on the staff, resign their appointments; if not on the staff there is no regulation to prevent their standing for Parliament. Further, under paragraph 420 of the King's Regulations, officers are forbidden to institute or take part in any meetings, demonstrations, or processions for Party or political purposes, in barracks, quarters, camps, or their vicinity; and under no circumstances whatever will they attend such meetings, whenever held, in uniform.

The New Rifle—Places of Manufacture.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state at what factories the improved pattern of rifle, approved in 1903, is being made, and whether the jigs, gauges, cutters, and other special tools for the manufacture are made at the Government works or at the respective factories where the rifle is produced.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) This rifle is being made at the Government Factories, and at the

Birmingham Small Arms and London Small Arms Factories. Each factory makes its own tools.

Army Discharge Regulations.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state under what rule of the King's Regulations a private soldier in the Scots Regiment of Foot Guards, certificate of discharge, No. 4731, was accompanied by a non-commissioned officer to his home in the Island of Lewis in October, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) If the hon. Member refers to such cases as those alluded to in his Question of the 10th instant,† the reply is that as such cases are not considered of sufficient importance to report to headquarters, there is no information to show why in each specific instance a conducting party is detailed.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the Borough of Dublin (St. Stephen's Green Division), in the room of James McCann, esquire, deceased.—(*Captain Donelan.*)

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland) in moving the Second Reading of the Land Values (Assessment and Rating) Bill, said that he ought first to apologise to the House for the extraordinary luck he had had in the ballot year after year. Perhaps it was rather an unfair return for his good fortune that he asked the House for the third time to help to crack the hard nut of the subject of the taxation of land values. He thought there was very good reason why they should discuss this subject for the third year in succession. Two years ago, in spite of the novelty of the question, the first concrete and practical measure introduced into the House was only defeated by a majority of seventy-one. The next year opinion had sufficiently developed, and the Bill of his hon. friend the Member for Camberwell was only defeated by a majority of thirteen; and it would not be an unheard of miracle if time worked the abolition of that majority. The Bill he introduced stood in a different position in one respect from that introduced the year before last, or that presented last year by the hon. Member for Camberwell. This question was undoubtedly started by men who, by no stretch of the term, could be called conservative. To many the proposal had a flavour of revolution. He did not deny that the Liberal Party were frankly committed to this proposal. It was well known that there was in previous years an effort on the part of the present Government to defeat it; but this year, unless the Government deliberately insisted upon it, this measure had passed out of the category of necessary Party controversy. This was not his Bill; it was not a Party Bill. It was the result of prolonged, careful, business-like deliberation on the part of a Conference of Municipalities representing no fewer than 150 local authorities, including some of the greatest cities in the country, such as Bolton, Bradford, Cardiff, Dublin, Dundee, Glasgow, Halifax, Liverpool, Manchester, Salford, Sheffield, Sunderland, West Ham, the London County Council, and a large number of the most important of the London boroughs. There were also very many, not on the list, which supported the principle, and so far as he knew there were hardly any, if any, that had made a declaration against it. In many of the councils supporting it, such as Liverpool, there was a definite Conservative preponderance, and therefore in no sense could the Bill be regarded as a Party measure. In regard to the Bill itself, they had to confine it to England and Wales. There were technical difficulties practically insuperable to including within its scope Scotland and Ireland; but the municipal feeling in both these countries was as advanced as in England. In Ireland, Dublin and other corporations had taken part in the conference, while Scotch opinion was even more ripe for this change. The responsibility and labour of the conferences on the subject had been undertaken chiefly by the Glasgow Corporation and though it had been impossible to incorporate clauses in this Bill to deal with Scotland, he and his friends who agreed with him, hoped that, if the House approved of the principle, *a fortiori* they would send a Scotch Bill to the Committee upstairs; for it could hardly be denied that on the further side of the Tweed there was a more matured conviction in favour of this as an equitable reform.

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† See page 739.

No one, like himself, who applied his mind to the subject, would ever be inclined to regard the methods and machinery by which the intention of the Bill could be applied as easy of settlement. They were not asking that day, be it understood, for an endorsement of all the details of this Bill at once. They hoped the House would trust one of its Standing Committees, which were not very busy at present, to deal with the many admitted complications which necessarily surrounded this far-reaching change. There was only one thing to consider that day. Would the House assent to two underlying principles? First, that in case of undeveloped property the real selling value of the land should be the basis of assessment, not the use value at which the land was let for the moment; and second, that land values were a proper subject of separate rating from buildings and improvements. Just for a moment before dealing with those underlying principles on which they would vote that day, he would ask the House to pay close attention to the difference between this Bill and that introduced last year by the hon. Member for Camberwell. The main features of this Bill, and those which the House had previously discussed, were the same, the goal sought to be attained was the same, and the final results to be reached were the same. In both Bills the land valuation was based on the selling value of the land. In both there was a separate column of land valuation standing side by side with the present assessment which was based on the letting value of the land and buildings together. In both, the same person paid the rate as now, and it was not proposed to break existing contracts, or interfere in any sudden or disturbing way with the humble investor in ground rents who was the object of so much, and at times some just, solicitude. In the case of new leases, the land rate might be deducted from the rent as provided for by Clause 3. So far his Bill and that of the hon. Member for Camberwell were alike. The differences between them were—in his hon. friend's Bill there was to be an entirely new rate levied on the land value of every hereditament in relief of existing rates. It was to be no great rate; it might not exceed 1d. in the £ on capital value, which would be equal to from 2s. to 2s. 6d. annual value. Of course those who promoted the Bill contemplated the increase of the tax as time went on and public opinion ripened. The tax on unoccupied land would, in the first instance, be small, and would not be in accordance with the value of the site. In the Bill now before the House it was proposed to tax unoccupied land to the extent of the full current rate on its real value, the annual value being taken as 3 per cent. of the selling value, which would mean a very substantial addition to taxation where land was held out of use, as he thought, unsocially, and would be a great encouragement to building. But, where the land had been considerably developed and the present assessment was greater than the new land valuation, the new rate would not be greater than at present. Relief to existing rates would depend on the amount of land, ready to be developed, now escaping taxation within the area of the rating authority in the outskirts of towns. But though there was no difference in appearance, there was in fact a vital change. There would be a separate column by which it would be possible to compare the burden of taxation on unearned values and the burden on buildings. It would be open to put in the future a higher special rate on the land valuation, as opinion grew in regard to the existence of the evil.

There was one other feature to which he wished to call attention as showing the spirit in which the Bill had been introduced. At the present time in arriving at the assessment of hereditaments deductions were made to allow for repairs and depreciations. These deductions obviously should be applicable only to buildings. It was manifestly absurd to allow for wear and tear of land which was increasing in value every year. He hoped he had made clear the intention of the

Bill, whatever its merits might be. And now he came to the chief questions which underlay it. First of all, was the House ready to accept the principle that undeveloped or half-developed land should be taxed at its real value in such a way as to force owners to part with it or to realise. He was uncertain as to how much opposition there was to the taxation of unoccupied land. The President of the Local Government Board, who had not shown himself friendly to such legislation, speaking the other day to a deputation from the municipalities, did not altogether throw cold water on the proposal to tax unoccupied land. When once the matter was faced fairly, it was almost too patent to be rejected. Here, on one hand, they had land in the developed quarters of a town where payers of house rent, hard working improvers, investors of capital, were mulcted in annually increasing rates on their improvements. Side by side they had owners of undeveloped land, the value of which was rising every year, a value realisable either by sale or building. That land ought to be the first and not the last to pay; it ought not to be exempt until the owner in his own good time consented to bring the land into use to relieve the hardly pressed community. Was there any doubt of the existing value? He did not know whether any Members who took the train daily to their homes in the direction of Victoria and Earl's Court from Westminster Bridge Station had noticed an advertisment announcing the sale of freehold land by a Cheapside Land Company. It was worth while reading a few sentences from that poster; hon. Members could read it at greater length themselves. It said—

> "The best investment now is, undeniably, freehold land. This never shrinks in value, it is ever increasing and the investment is growing more and more profitable without any effort on the part of the owner. . . . Several of our estates are within the zone of projected electric railways, and are likely to be very rapidly enhanced in value. . . . Buy to hold and sell at a profit."

He should like to give one or two instances which were brought up in the debates in the various corporations while this Bill was being discussed throughout the country. The case of Bradford was perhaps the best. It was stated by the mover of the resolution that the Bradford Corporation should support this Bill, and the statement had been unchallenged that there were four estates in the neighbourhood of Bradford which at a reasonable calculation were worth £2,000,000, and that the rates on these estates only amounted to £761. The mover took one particular instance—

> "Some time ago the corporation were parties in arbitration proceedings with Lord Rosse, certain land belonging to his Lordship being wanted by the Waterworks Committee, It was stated in evidence on behalf Lord Rosse that he was the owner of 1,300 acres of land in Heaton and Shipley, all of it eminently suitable for building purposes. If half-a-crown a yard was taken as the value of this land for building purposes, its total value was £780,000. And yet Lord Rosse, in respect of his estate, contributed the sum of £189 towards the expenses and up-keep of the city of Bradford."

A calculation was also made by the same speaker as to what the effect of a Bill of this kind would be in Bradford—

> "In the old city of Bradford, consisting of 10,767 acres, there were 4,512 acres of land unbuilt upon. These figures did not include quarries and other forms of land which would not be available for building. Estimating, as he thought they were justified in doing, that these 4,512 acres of land were worth 3s. 6d. a yard, it would be seen that they would be worth £3,821,644. Under the present system of rating, averaging the value of the land at £40 per acre—well within the mark he thought—it stood in the rate book as though it were worth £180,480. Under the new system of rating, therefore, there would be a very large gain on this land. It would stand in the books as being worth £3,641,184 more than it was represented to be worth under the present system, and it would bring in no less than £41,872 per year in rates."

That might be said to be an exaggerated estimate; but at any rate there could be no denial that there would be an enormous increase in the rateable possibilities of a town like Bradford if such land were brought under rating. But the more important fact than the increase of rating would be the compulsion to those landlords to bring their land into real use which corresponded to its real value.

One objection, which might have some weight with certain minds, to the taxation of vacant spaces was that the scheme would destroy the garden streets; that it would be an unfortunate thing to tax these gardens, and so close up the city, and keep out the air from the crowded spaces of the great towns. It was said that they would drive the parks and squares into the market, and that they would be built upon just where the open spaces were wanted. Everyone would agree that that was a danger which it would be well to avoid. But that was a local exception to the general rule that land should be built on where the economic needs of the people demanded it. But there was another way of dealing with it than by exempting that land from taxation. At the present moment in Germany the municipal corporations looked far more ahead than we did. The practice in all German municipal corporations in regulating the development of their towns was to lay down that in certain districts there were to be town houses of a certain kind, houses with gardens; in other districts that there might be closer buildings and working-class houses put up. They insisted to a far greater extent than in our municipalities on having large open spaces even where the municipalities did not own the open spaces. In fact they regulated the development of the land. If they thought it was desirable for the benefit of the town that a particular street should remain a street of villa residences with gardens rather than become a closely built working class district, it would be a perfectly reasonable thing that those houses of the well-to-do should be allowed to remain. There would be no difficulty whatever in giving power to municipalities to make regulations in such a matter if the municipality wished to do so.

Those who advanced the argument that it would be difficult or impossible to make a true assessment of and values relied chiefly on the evidence, purely speculative, of certain experts who had given evidence before the Local Taxation Commission. That evidence was obviously entitled to be considered, but other experts had given evidence before the Commission who expressed the opinion that it was a feasible and inexpensive proposal, and it was somewhat remarkable that in the last year all the great corporations of the country should have been discussing this question, and that none should have found any insuperable difficulty in the proposal. But the promoters of this Bill had rather more than supposition and speculation to back their proposals. Whilst we in this country were pottering about and talking of expenses, other great industrial communities were actually doing this work before our eyes. In Queensland the whole of the local taxation was based on the land values, and it was being done in New Zealand, where local authorities, both in town and country, were adopting land valuation as the basis of all local taxation. New York had, within a year or two, made an assessment of the actual land values of the whole of New York. Paris, which appointed a committee of assessment in the year 1898, had, at an expenditure which did not amount to as much as £50,000, finished the assessment of the city in the course of two years, only one portion of which was the assessment of the capital value of the land. Prussia was the strongest case for the principles of the proposals this Bill now made. Prussia had in the last few years permitted her corporations to use a new basis for their taxation—a tax on the value of land including undeveloped land. On 2nd October, 1899, the Minister of the Interior issued a circular advising corporations to adopt the system, and stating that the object of the new valuation was to insure that the capital value of building plots from time to time should be made fully subject to taxation. There had been a very great response to those proposals by the corporations of Germany, no less than sixty-seven towns and fifty-six urban authorities having adopted them, many of the latter being the great districts that surrounded Berlin. Not a single corporation which had adopted the system had gone back from its opinion, and all found this new system of taxation satisfactory. The experience of Cologne proved that no difficulty was experienced in making the assessment—

> "In 1893 at the new assessment by the State of the building tax (the old tax) in the case of 21,292 assessments there were no fewer than 2,703 objections. At the assessment on the capital value in 1898–9, out of some 30,000 assessments only 174 objections were raised."

The aims and objects of the taxation were identically the same as those of the proposers of this Bill. The magistrate of Düsseldof, in urging his corporation to adopt the tax, said—

> "There is not the smallest ground for allowing a tax to remain upon the agricultural

value only of those land plots, whose value had been raised by speculation. The income of such land-plots is yearly increasing by reason of the larger number of buildings which are being erected, and although they begin to yield in a short time ten or more times what they formerly yielded, yet such increase is in no way touched by the present assessment. Whom have the owners to thank for such increase of value? Not themselves and their own endeavours, but the flourishing community in the burden of whose taxation they bear so small a part."

The result of the tax in Breslau, although the tax was very low, had been that the land speculators had been forced to pay 315,000 marks a year where in previous years they had only paid 10,000 marks, and that had enabled the corporation of Breslau to remit in general local taxation 105,000 marks which they had previously levied on buildings consisting of small and medium-sized tenements. In Spandau, which was a suburb of Berlin, much as Richmond is of London, the following had resulted—

> "Some owners of large valuable estates were obliged to pay much more than before. The land tax of an owner whose lands were worth many millions (of marks) had come to ninety-six marks hitherto; now he was obliged to pay 14,000 marks. . . . The landlords had feared that no more sales of land would be possible. But exactly the opposite had happened. In the short time since the introduction of the ground value tax on April 1st, there have been more sales of land in Spandau than in years before and the demand is still very lively."

Ultimately a further and even greater intention underlay the Bill. The great object of a separate assessment of land was to obtain a new source of taxation in relief of that levied on buildings and improvements. If the principles of this Bill were brought into operation there would be, for the first time, a rough and ready differentiation between the land value on the one hand and the building on the other, rough and ready because the building value could only be arrived at by subtracting the land valuation from the present assessment. The promoters of the Bill thought when they had land valuation they would have won half their battle and that then all they desired to show would become patent to everyone. People would see on the same rate-book two properties standing under the present assessment, say of the value of £250. One of those properties would be in the centre of the town where the land was highly valuable and where the assessment of the land value might be £150, while that of the building would be £100, which would represent the expenditure on the buildings and improvement on the land. In the other case the property would be more on the outskirts of the town where land was less valuable and there the land valuation might be only £50 and the improvements would be represented by £200. Yet both properties would pay the same rates, but in one case the buildings would only pay two-fifths of the rates while in the other it would pay four-fifths. What was our present system but a system to penalise industry? The tax now paid was a house tax, a tax which was as bad as the corn tax. If a house was taxed at 8s. in the £, somebody must pay the tax and it could not be the foreigner. The result was that it took the form of overcrowding, the worst evil of our great cities and great industrial centres. It was almost irrelevant to talk about remedies for overcrowding, such as cheaper building loans and destruction of slums by municipal action, when this pre-eminent fact stood out that almost every house erected was subjected to a tax of a third of its annual value. There was no need to wonder at the extraordinary anomaly that the building trade was depressed, whilst the people of the towns were crying out for more room in which to live. He hoped that the Government would not look upon this proposal in quite so unfavourable a light as hitherto. He had stated the immediate object and some of the hopes he had in taking the course he had taken to-day. All that was asked for was that corporations might be allowed to make this great experiment with all the cautious confidence with which they were accustomed to move, and he hoped that the Government would not by dilatory or antagonistic tactics disappoint those hopes.

*MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) said that the Bill presented to-day was the result of a year's very hard work and it had the support of all the largest municipalities of England. It had not been objected to by any. He accounted himself fortunate in that he was allowed to make a few observations in support of the measure, because he claimed to have some municipal experience, having been in close and active connection with the Corporation of Liverpool and having served on its most important committees. A great deal depended on the point of view from which the proposition was looked at. Here was a suggested tax, and there was no doubt that being a tax it must be objectionable, because all taxes were objectionable both in principle and in detail. They were necessary evils and they had to make the best of them. Had this been a suggestion for an entirely new impost, clearly it could not have claimed to be considered in the same favourable light. But the Bill simply involved a re-arrangement of existing taxation, a re-arrangement which would make fair and equitable that which was at present unfair and unequitable. In fact, instead of being an addition to the assessment the principles of the Bill, if adopted, would be in relief of the *bona fide* taxpayer. The local burdens of our cities and urban districts had of late years swollen to an enormous extent, and the figures were now appalling, so much so that politicians and statesmen regarded with considerable misgiving and disquietude the possibilities of any further increase. All these local burdens were now met by taxation on a certain assessment. What was the assessment that contributed to those burdens, that was, in fact, the sole contributory? It was an assessment only on that property which was actually occupied, and the basis of contribution was its letting value. The result was that local taxation for public improvements—for sewering, paving, and municipal and other amenities—also the whole cost of the poor together with that portion of imperial taxation derived from inhabited house duty, fell exclusively on the occupied portion of the hereditament, and, therefore, the landlord who, for any reason, wilful or otherwise, neglected, or spoiled, his land, escaped with a reduced taxation, or possibly paid nothing at all.

He wished, with the permission of the House, to give two short illustrations under existing conditions capable of being actual fact from his own experience. The first one was this. They took three pieces of land, each of the same area, each fronting the same street, and each belonging to a different owner. On the first of these three pieces the owner built to the value of £2,000; on the second, the owner built to the value of £500; and on the third, the owner did not build at all, leaving his land, there in the main street, occupied as a depository for dead cats and old sardine cans. The Corporation of Liverpool then made this road into a fine street. They spent thousands of pounds at the expense of the general rates on paving, sewering, making handsome footpaths, putting down a system of electric trams, giving the finest water supply in the world, providing excellent police, and providing also a handsome park within a few hundred yards of these three properties, each of which was equally benefited by this general outlay. Each of them occupied an exactly equal integral portion in square yards, in the area of the city, and each of them had the same advantages of the same main street. Each of these plots contained altogether 500 square yards, worth, say, £3 a yard. Now, what was the result? The value of plot 1, with buildings upon it worth £2,000 and the land itself worth £1,500, was brought to the value of £3,500; plot 2 with buildings worth £500, was brought to the value of £2,000; and plot 3 remained at £1,500, the value of the land. The value of letting to a tenant of each of those three plots arose out of the nature and extent of the buildings, and when compared together the respective assessments were therefore out of all proportion, because the system of contribution was based upon the value to let and not based upon the value of the actual hereditament they had got in the position itself. The owner of plot 1 was a man of enterprise and he had done something for the city. He deserved consideration; he deserved some favour. But what was his position? He was paying seven-eighths of the taxation which fell on those three pieces of land; plot 2 contributed one-eighth, and plot 3 escaped altogether. The hon. Member submitted that anything more unjust or unfair or contrary to public policy could hardly be imagined than this condition of affairs which he had ventured to describe as possible from actual personal experience. He would trouble the House with another important illustration also from his own study. In every city there were slums, and unfortunately in some of our cities these slums were in a most frightful condition; the property was tumbling down and wretched, and it was in every sense demoralising to those inhabitants whose business and necessities compelled them to live in that particular district. Now the great object of all cities, and he thought of the Legislature and of this House at large—of Members, he believed, on both sides—was that a state of affairs like this should be as rapidly as possible put an end to, and that every facility and inducement should be given in order to bring about a better state of affairs. Now, what was the position with regard to slum property? The present taxation upon it was trifling, but on the other hand it turned out that the sites in a good many instances were extremely valuable. If they wanted to know how valuable some of these sites turned out to be they had only got to be a member of the Liverpool Insanitary Property Committee. For some years he was a member of that committee and his friend the Member for the East Toxteth Division of Liverpool was chairman of that committee for some time; and they knew the difficulty which they had to encounter in their undertaking. But these two illustrations were not all. There was a further point; arising out of both of them, and it was this. The march of progress and the improvement of the city continued for a period of years in that suburban road to which he had referred, and by the expenditure of public money all those three properties continued to rise in value; but the extraordinary part of it was that the fully improved portion of the property advanced, in percentage, less than either of the other two, because it had been brought to its comparatively fully-developed state, whereas the other two maintained the potentiality for further improvement. The consequence was that the greater and most unfair proportion of taxation was contributed by the fully improved property, which gained less by the improvement on the whole. In the slum case this was particularly applicable, because, when the corporation, in improving a district, had pulled down half of the slums and an excellent property had been erected on that site, the site of the other slum property was immensely improved in value, all at the expense of the city.

In conclusion, he wished to point out what he conceived to be the main principles of the Bill before the House. For the purpose of ascertaining the proportions in which local taxation was to be contributed each property was supposed to have two distinct values, a site value first, and secondly the value of the buildings upon it. All these figures were included in the rate book, and the annual value of the site was taken at 3 per cent. of the capital value of such site. What was the result in his opinion and experience and in the experience of all those municipal authorities who had taken a keen interest in these matters, and whom they represented here that day? The first result would be that all the elements of unfairness which he had indicated would be swept away; and secondly the speculator holding front and corner plots would have to pay some tax which would make him inclined to build and improve the land so as to get a return. All existing contracts would be excepted. There was nothing in the Bill, no suggestion, to upset any existing contract so as to wrong any person who was now possessed of any property. This was not to be a tax on the landlords, and he hoped it would not be put in that sense. It was a suggested contribution by the speculator in corner lots who was holding his land for a rise. It would be a tax on neglect, stupidity, and lack of enterprise. It would not increase taxation in any city by a single penny. The object of the Bill was to make fair and enlarge the basis of taxation, in order that those might be brought in to contribute who at present unfairly escaped. He took it the Bill was not controversial, it simply aimed at bringing about justice and prudence. It was not a Private Bill except in the technical sense, because it came before the House with the support of the great municipalities of the Kingdom who through their selected representatives had for a whole year been examining into the subject, and who now put forward a considered proposal to which they were entitled to ask that the House should give a patient consideration.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*Mr. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford) said that the modified form in which this Bill had been introduced from time to time proved that the opponents of the measure had been justified in their opposition. Before proceeding to show why in his opinion the proposals of the Bill were neither just nor prudent, he desired to deal with the arguments by which the Second Reading had been supported. Everyone would agree with the general proposition that land should be taxed at its real value, and his criticism on the Bill was that it proposed to tax land not on its real, but on a fictitious, value, which would put it on a separate plane from that of any other rated property. There was no larger domestic question at present than that of local taxation, and, pending the action of the Government, why should they separate particular classes of property and treat them unfairly? He agreed that if land was specially benefited by local expenditure it ought to be assessed at its benefited value. That was true of all property, because, in ascertaining the true value, its value under conditions as they existed at the moment must be considered. The arguments used by the promoter in favour of the Bill were not as strong as he had hoped they would be. The hon. Member had seemed to rely on the fact that the proposal was supported by a large number of municipalities. That was an important factor, but the House had not to consider in these matters the opinions of any bodies, however powerful, but to see whether the proposals incorporated in the Bill could be accepted as reasonable and right. The hon. Member also referred to a case in which 4,500 acres were concerned. To approach the question as though it were advisable as soon as possible to build over a great area of land to that extent was an entirely false way of dealing with the matter. There was at present quite sufficient temptation to build and overbuild, to crowd and overcrowd, our large municipal areas, and he certainly would not give any inducement to the land speculator to take up sites before they came naturally into the market, and to overcrowd them in his own interest. The hon. Member made a suggestion for dealing with a case of that kind, but did he really think it was a practical proposal? He protested against the principle which would enable the owner of a so-called villa street to be excepted from a principle which, if applied at all, ought to apply to all the property in the area. The Bill, in his opinion, would tend unfairly to push land into the market which was not ripe for building purposes, and to cause it to be crowded with an undue number of buildings. Reference had been made to the system which obtained in foreign towns. But the conditions of local taxation in this country were altogether different from those which existed abroad. Here, certain national burdens were thrown upon local resources, and the incidence of local taxation fell upon certain classes of property only, and while they were dealing with those classes of property they ought to have one system of assessment applicable to all. In New York property was rated on the principle of capitalisation. That might be a bad or a good system, but it was certainly just, if the capitalisation view was taken with regard to one class of property, that it should be taken with regard to all classes of property. It was surely misleading to quote the New York system without at the same time pointing out that the whole system of assessment and incidence was on a totally different basis there as compared with this country. He fully agreed that if anything could be done to improve slum properties, or to better the condition of the poorer parts of our large towns, it was very desirable that it should be done, but this Bill attempted to do it in a wrong way. It was far better to wait for a real remedy than to apply a mere quack remedy, and in his opinion the present Bill would have absolutely the opposite effect to that of furthering the reforms which all desired.

Neither the mover nor the seconder of the Bill had dealt at length with the points really concerned. The first proposal was that in assessing site values the principle of capital value, as against that of annual rental, should be introduced. That was a very important matter. On principle he thought the old-fashioned doctrine was right, namely, that the rate should be raised in relation to the benefit which the ratepayer received. That was the reason that the rate was now raised on annual value, and not on capital value, in respect of which, at the moment, a particular ratepayer might be receiving no benefit at all. This was not a matter to be dealt with as regarded land alone. Its effects should be considered as applied to all classes of property. He had never gone to the extent of saying that double valuation was impossible. Say a man had land worth £100,000, but which at present was producing no income to the owner. It was perfectly clear that if a charge of this kind were put upon the land, there would be a fictitious tendency to push that land into the market. In his opinion it was an advantage to keep land in our towns out of the market, so far as building speculators were concerned. On the other side, let them take the case of a manufacturer who had got £100,000 invested, from which he was not deriving any interest. Surely they ought not to treat him on the same basis as the landowner, and then they would have to disregard whether he was making any profit or not and rate him on his capitalised value. It would be monstrous to suggest a rate of that kind upon the shopkeeper or manufacturer in the particular instances he had given. What he desired was that, as regarded the various classes of property, they should not put a burden upon one which they refused to put upon another. Not only should no special burden be put upon land but they ought, if possible, to bring in other classes of property upon the same basis in order to spread the burden over as wide an area as possible. That was why in his Amendment he pointed out that what they wanted was not to put a further burden upon a class of property which was now very heavily rated, but rather to bring in other sources of property to be put on the same basis, in order that all classes of property might be taxed alike. Words like "rating" and "real" value had to be further analysed. They wanted all sources of property to be rated equitably and at their real value, but the proposal in Subsection 2 of this Bill was absolutely and wholly unfair as applied to land if they did not apply it for the purposes of local taxation generally. The old principle adopted in Imperial and local taxation was much sounder than the principle of capitalised value. This Bill referred to urban districts, but in urban districts in this country there were large agricultural properties, and in his opinion agricultural land was much too heavily rated at the present time. If they took the 3 per cent. basis on the capitalised value of land they would undoubtedly put a further burden upon what was already the most heavily burdened of all property in this country. Those were considerations which ought to be threshed out. They wanted to see whether the capitalised idea as applied to site values was fair or not, and if they found it was not fair that went to the whole basis of this Bill. All these site values were properly rated at the present moment upon the basis of their annual value, if they took the same basis for them as for other classes of property. The only possible advantage which this Bill could give as regarded increased income to our municipalities, would be by altering the method of assessment, and such alteration would be unfair, because it would put a special burden upon a particular class of property which ought to be borne equally by all classes of property. With regard to unoccupied hereditaments in certain districts they were rated at the present moment. In the City of London they paid half the rates on unoccupied hereditaments.

He wished to show why it was not right to introduce the system which had come from Scotland and chiefly from Glasgow. Before the Commission the evidence on this point did not come from England but from the more highly educated districts, upon this question, north of the Tweed. A vast number of burdens now put upon the local taxpayer were incident to occupation or population and had nothing to do with the land. Take education, for example. Why should they put a special education rate upon unoccupied land? What were called national matters depended upon population and occupation of property, and why should a special burden be placed upon unoccupied property? There was a great deal to be said for the suggestion contained in the Minority Report of the Royal Commission. If there were particular circumstances which gave a value to land and which were not connected with the occupation of land, if they carefully took those cases out and put them into a particular schedule they might, as regarded those isolated obligations, say that land, whether occupied or not, ought to bear its share of the burdens, but, as a matter of fact, from that point of view there was no unoccupied land in English towns. The occupiers got the chief benefit, and as soon as land was occupied the municipality had increased expenditure, and therefore the new occupiers should find their fair share. If land was unoccupied the services required were infinitely less than for occupied land. If more land was forced into the market it meant that as the population increased upon it the expenses in connection with it also increased, and as they arose they ought to get a proper contribution in respect of the population. That was why in England they had adopted the principle of putting those burdens on the occupier who got the greatest share of the advantages. He thought the House should carefully consider whether they could not devise some fair division as between the land on the one side and occupation on the other. He hoped he had shown that he wished to approach this question with a desire to put local taxation upon a fair basis, and he did not think that the proposals of this Bill would conduce to that object. The form of his Amendment was really to call attention to the general position of this question of the incidence of local taxation, and they could never put this matter right, in his opinion, as long as they charged on local funds serious burdens which ought to be borne by the National Exchequer. As long as they had a system of that kind it must be unfair to try to put these national burdens in a particular way upon what had been called site values. The land in its local connection had nothing to do with these great national burdens which formed a great part of local taxation. What had unoccupied land got to do with education? It was impossible to readjust local taxation until they drew the necessary distinction between national and local services. So far as those services were a benefit to the land he should not dissent from the proposition that land ought to bear its proper share of the burdens. He hoped the House would take the same view as on former occasions, and say that, however desirable some change in this direction might be, the present proposal was not sufficiently wide in its character or well digested in regard to its details. He begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

*MR. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn) said he welcomed this Bill because it had given them an opportunity of discussing a question which had engaged the attention, not only of this House, but of the country for some considerable time. He differed most profoundly from the provisions of the Bill, but he might be permitted to offer the mover his hearty congratulations on the ability and moderation with which in this session and in the session of 1902 he had brought forward proposals inconsistent with each other, but still intended to give practical form to theories which had no real foundation. The root fallacy which underlay this bill was that it tapped a new source of revenue. This was contrary to fact. Experts were practically unanimous in holding that the real incidence of the rates was already on the owners of property. [AN HON. MEMBER: No.] Previous speakers had stated that the London County Council had agreed to this Bill, but, having had the honour of serving on that body for many years, he ventured to say that the Council as a whole had never been called upon to pass an opinion on the measure. The last time the Council came to a conclusion on the question they were, not unanimously, but very strongly, in favour of not respecting existing contracts—a very material point of difference between them and the promoters of this Bill. The valuer of the London County Council, whose conclusions must command respect on both sides of the House because of his special experience, was of opinion that the burden of the rates fell entirely upon the owners of property, and for the most part upon the owners of land. If they were to apply this consideration even to the proposed taxation of vacant land and the sites of empty houses, it would be seen that here also the Bill could confer no ultimate benefit on the ratepayers. The effect would be to relieve of some portion of the rates the owners of land that happened to be occupied, and to cast that portion on the owners of property that happened to be unoccupied. The owners as a body would bear the same amount of rates, but the amount would be evenly distributed between those who were and those who were not receiving income, instead of placing it at a rather higher rate on those who were receiving income. The present practice of taxing owners when they had income out of which to pay taxes was clearly one which was more convenient for them, and caused no loss, so far as he could see, to the public.

This Bill was the latest product of the agitation which started, as those interested in the question would remember, with the cry that ground rents ought to be rated. The Bill now before the House supplied very cogent evidence of the hollowness of this cry. Under the Bill, during existing, tenancies all the rates on occupied premises were to be paid by the present ratepayers—there would be no difference there—and during future tenancies the land value rate was to fall upon the immediate landlord who himself was to have no power of deduction from those to whom he in his turn paid the rent. In short, except in the very rare cases where the ground landlord was himself the immediate landlord, ground landlords were never to be affected by the Bill. So that, as far as he could see, the ground landlord who was principally aimed at in the agitation was to be exempt for all eternity under the Bill.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): Not under future contracts.

*MR. REMNANT said the Bill put the rate only on the immediate landlord, and this was surely a curious prescription for the cure of what the so-called Progressive Party had so long stated was a deep-seated disease. All he could say was that he did not envy them their reception at the hands of those who had been duped by their promises. Clause 1, Sub-section 4, provided for cases where the annual land value exceeded the total rateable value. In all these cases under Clause 3 occupiers under future leases would pay no rates at all, and this was to happen although far and away the greater part of the rates was spent for the benefit of the occupiers, and occupiers formed an overwhelming majority of the electors who chose the body who had to levy the rates.

MR. TREVELYAN said that Sub-section 4, Clause 1, would obviously only refer to unoccupied land, or to land not used up to its real value.

*MR. REMNANT did not think that interruption affected his argument at all. He was afraid his hon. friend did not see the point. The Bill provided that where the land value exceeded the rateable value the whole of the rates might be deducted from the immediate landlord. Under Clause 3 there was another *reductio ad absurdum*, if he might say so without disrespect. Under this clause the identity of the immediate landlord shifted under every sub-lease. Suppose that the hon. Member who had introduced this Bill let a house to the hon. Member for Liverpool, who seconded him, for a term of years, a higher rent would of course be payable in consideration of the lessor's liability under the Bill to pay the land value rate. But suppose further that the hon. Member for Liverpool afterwards granted a sub-lease to a third person—under the Bill the original lessor would be relieved of his obligation, for which he would be receiving consideration in the shape of a higher rent, and it would be transferred to the hon. Member for Liverpool.

MR. TREVELYAN said the intention was that under a new agreement the rate might be shifted back. Supposing there were a series of tenancies, the clause would obviously apply to every new lease, whether made in the second or third place.

*MR. REMNANT said he was obliged to the hon. Member for telling the House what was the intention of the promoters of the Bill, but he was presuming that they were dealing with the Bill as presented to the House. They could not read into the Bill intentions which were not plain on the face of it. His contention was that this Bill did not meet the case, and that, on the other hand, it had a directly contrary effect to what the promoters wished it to have. Provision was made in Clause 4 for the case of several tenants separately rated but comprised within a single building. There was no provision in the Bill for several tenants comprised in a single tenement but not separately rated. In large cities, and especially the city of London, it was an exceedingly common practice for the lessee of a building to let it out in several tenements to be used as offices, or for residential or other purposes. As far as he could see from the Bill the only defence of Clause 3 was that the immediate landlord should always pay the land value rate, because any increment in the land value went immediately to him at the termination of the occupier's lease. It was obvious, therefore, that in the case of all buildings let on the lines he had suggested where the tenements were not separately rated that presumed intention of the Bill, as expressed in Clause 3, would be hopelessly defeated. The Bill enabled the lessee, who got all the benefit of any increase in the rental value, to deduct the rates from his immediate landlord.

Even if the provisions of the Bill were as perfect as they were manifestly imperfect, they were open to the widest possible objection on grounds of public policy. The real object of the Bill was to rearrange the burden falling on land, but it did nothing to bring under local taxation forms of property now exempt, and which it was agreed by people of all shades of opinion should not be absolutely exempt. The promoters in this case seemed so anxious to pull an imaginary mote out of the eye of the landlord that they failed to see the beam in the eye of the owner of personal property. At present the bulk of our local taxation was borne by real property. The House well knew that personal property which was formerly liable to contribute to the rates had by the legislation of the last century become exempt. That personal property at present escaped its fair share of taxation had been admitted by experts of all parties. He hoped the House would allow him to refer to the evidence given in 1890 by the late Mr. Costelloe, a distinguished member of the London County Council, before the Town Holdings Committee appointed by this House. Mr. Costelloe, after explaining his scheme for a municipal death duty, said—

> "If anyone objects that the scheme I have suggested would be putting a considerable tax upon persons who may have invested in incomes, limited or otherwise, to be derived out of land and that that would place them on a different footing from those who live on the produce of stock, or on dividends, I can only say that I am quite willing to join in levelling the latter up; and I think it is beyond doubt that they now pay far too little."

And again when asked, "If the system of taxation is to be followed as regards land, can you see any reason why it should not be followed as regards other classes of property?" Mr. Costelloe replied—

> "I cordially agree that it should be. I think there are great masses of personal property which may be called unearned income; whether it is simply derived from antecedent saving by the recipient, or by someone else, or is the produce of Stock Exchange gambling or other speculation, or is the fruit of the silent growth of values for general reasons (as with water shares), or is simply a great bonus conferred somehow on capital at the expense of the community as with much of the income that is derived from dividends, I venture to say that the whole of it, even that which consists of honourable savings, is also very much undertaxed."

The Radical Party, however [OPPOSITION cries of "Bring in a Bill"] both in Parliament and in the London County Council had never made, so far as he knew, the slightest effort to redress that which was obviously the main grievance in regard to local taxation. On the other hand, the Royal Commission appointed by the late Lord Salisbury's Government to inquire into the whole question of local taxation, made in 1901 a final Report containing an elaborate series of recommendations for the amendment of the present system. The Royal Commission pointed out that, while personal property subject to Imperial taxation was about three times as great as real property so chargeable, the non-rateable property contributed to local objects—if elementary education were excluded—only a little over 6 per cent. of the whole expenditure, and nearly 83 per cent. fell on the rates. To remedy that inequality, in some measure, it was suggested that, *inter alia*, there should be an increased payment from the death duties on personalty for local purposes; that the transfer of trading licences and of establishment licences should be made complete, and that power should be given to increase their amount; while the assignment of a fixed portion of the income-tax was said to be deserving of consideration. The present Government had twice, in speeches of the Secretary to the Local Government Board in 1902 and 1903, pledged themselves to deal with the whole question, and a Valuation Bill had been promised in the King's Speech this session. One of the principal objections to the present Bill was that it would hinder the Government in this task by introducing needless complications into the present system of valuation. He asked the House to prefer the Amendment of his hon. friend, which he had the honour to second, to the Bill itself, because this Bill, while introducing harassing restrictions into free contracts, would confer no benefit upon the community, and because the Amendment pointed the way to a thorough reform of the present system of local taxation in accordance with the recommendations of the Royal Commission, to which they were encouraged to hope the Government would not be slow to give effect. He had much pleasure in seconding the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out all the words after the word 'that,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'no change in the incidence of local taxation will be satisfactory which does not recognise the unfairness of the existing charges and make further provision for the equitable contribution of all kinds of property to such taxation.'"—(*Mr. Cripps.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said some few weeks ago he had had the honour to introduce a deputation of the municipalities of this country, through their association, to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board on this very subject, but the reply given by the right hon. Gentleman to that deputation then, was not only a direct negative so far as the present moment was concerned, but by the words, "Never so far as this Government is concerned." He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman's view had been somewhat modified by the debate which had taken place that morning, and that he would allow the Bill to go into Committee, where the points which alone, apparently, were disputed could be discussed, and that, at any rate, the Government would not treat this as a Party question, but would leave the matter open to their supporters.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): Hear, hear!

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT said it was not a Party question, either politically or municipally, as was shown by the Minority Report of the Royal Commission, which was favourable to the proposals now made. Concessions had been made, and there was now a very near approach to an agreement in the matter. He thought it was common ground that this was no new source of taxation, but he hoped at the same time there would be a re-adjustment and a re-apportionment of the burden of taxation, and that urban land in the future would bear its true proportion of the burden of taxation. There was real respect shown in the Bill for existing contracts, but in the opinion of the municipalities, as expressed by their association, there ought to be further safeguards in this respect. That was, however, a matter for the Committee, if the principle of the Bill was accepted. That this was not a Party question was shown by the resolution which was unanimously adopted by the Association of Municipal Corporations, which included all the county, and nearly every one of the non-county, boroughs, and contained men of all Parties. The resolution was in these terms—

"That it is urgent to provide some means by which owners of land, whether occupied or vacant, shall contribute directly to local revenue."

That expressed, in one sentence, the main object of the Bill. The Bill showed a real respect for existing contracts, but the principle of the Bill was valuation; and he failed to see how valuation, if properly conducted, would give a fictitious value to land as was suggested by the hon. and learned Member for Stretford. Lord Balfour of Burleigh and a minority of the Royal Commission believed it was possible to deal with this matter by valuation, and if the basis was real valuation, it could not be otherwise than fair. The hon. Member for Stretford had admitted that a valuation could be accomplished, and that was the real answer to the arguments of the hon. Member. It had been said that there would be no accession to revenue, but, in his opinion, there would be a great potential accession to revenue, and a potentiality of distributing fairly the burden of the revenue derived. Owners of land might endeavour by a modification of the rentals to perpetuate something like the present condition of affairs, but having regard to the difficulties of change it would be almost impossible, if the principles of the Bill were accepted, for an owner to impose the present conditions. He thought that there was some force in the argument that the effect of the Bill would be to limit the additions to our large cities. That was one advantage of town life to those who had little or no opportunity of seeing the country, and although the hon. Member for Elland gave an instance in the case of Dusseldorf, the best instance of municipal administration in Europe, he ventured to think that the remedy suggested by the hon. Member was not the proper one. The restriction of particular classes of dwellings to particular parts would be most undesirable, and would not only create quarrels but would also create classes and castes, a thing to be avoided if possible. He ventured to suggest that the real remedy was to give more powers to the municipalities with regard to parks, open spaces, and the like. He did not think any difficulty would arise if corporations had the power of combining rural character with the most urban life. An illustration of the advantages to be derived from the possession of these powers was to be seen in the city of Nottingham. He warned the House against the specious, but delusive and dilatory, Amendment which had been moved. The hon. and learned Member for Stretford asked the House to wait till the general subject of local taxation could be dealt with. His answer to that was that that would be a long time coming, both as to Report and action. Still less, he thought, ought they to await the time of the taxation of personal property.

Sir Albert Rollit.

He would like to say one word about the bogey of municipal debt and indebtedness. He did not wish to ignore the large amount of municipal indebtedness, but he thought it was greatly exaggerated, and, compared with the danger in that House, the borough councils need have very little anxiety. People looked at municipal indebtedness with only one eye. They looked at the debit side of the ledger, and ignored the assets, which, in the matter, indirectly, of public health and of reproductive works, were very large indeed. He would remind the House that the Goschen Commission of 1870 came to the conclusion that there ought to be a direct and apparent, as well as a real and indirect, contribution by landlords in reference to local taxation; and for that reason they suggested the division of the rates between the owner and the occupier—another mode of attaining the object they had in view in this Bill. He thought there was an unanswerable case in favour of the measure, the principle of which, though there were points on which the municipalities were divided, commended itself to those who had the responsibility of dealing with local government, and who sought to be aided by proper provision of local taxation.

Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport) in support of the Bill, said that the hon. Member for the Stretford Division could not have the same knowledge of the urban centres, which this Bill sought to affect, as those who had promoted it. The hon. Member, in the first instance, gave it as his opinion that overbuilding was a greater evil than overcrowding, and that of the two he preferred the latter. Anyone who had any knowledge of those particular urban centres which were overcrowded never found one which was overbuilt, because that in itself would solve the overcrowding. It was to his mind a great evil that land should be held up, and he supported this Bill because he thought it would loosen the hold of the territorial owner, who in this matter had held unbounded sway. The existing state of the land laws of this country had most certainly encouraged the hoarding of land and were responsible for bringing about a state of overcrowding which was a disgrace to our civilisation. A landlord at the present time could hoard his land with impunity, and make a monopoly of it, and by so doing placed the whole of the burdens of taxation upon the community, while he took all the profits. The community were the victims of the landowners. An illustration of that was the town of Devonport. A hundred years ago Devonport was a rural village. When the Government built docks and works there the place began to grow. But the whole of the land was the property of one owner, and he held it up against the community, so that until ten years ago there was not a freehold tenure in the whole place, apart from certain lands belonging to the Government. An extraordinary system of leases for three lives prevailed, resulting in great uncertainty of tenure. Eight or ten years ago, owing to public pressure, the manorial lord consented, as a boon, to sell to the community two acres of land, for which he demanded £1,200 an acre, and so great an event was that that the transfer of the land was conducted with as much ceremony as the cutting of the first sod of a gigantic undertaking such as the building of the Trans-Siberian Railway. In Devonport it was the exception to find one family living in one house. At the present time, of the families living in Devonport, 2,500 occupied one room only—a thing only rendered possible by the existing state of the land laws. Since the loosening of the land much building had gone on; but what had been the result? When buildings were erected on land costing £2,000 an acre, it was impossible to build at a rental which a working man could pay, and the houses which had been built were vacated because the rental value was too high, and the overcrowding still continued, as indeed it would until some Bill was passed in this House to classify taxation as this Bill did. Another instance of the extraordinary powers that had been allowed to exist for generations in the hands of the landlords was to be seen in Devonport. Devonport was divided from Plymouth by a narrow creek, and a hundred years ago the manorial lords were allowed to get a Bill through this House giving to them, and to them alone, the whole right to build a bridge across that creek which was the main highway, and they imposed toll on every person who passed over.

MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) asked, on a point of order, whether this was a Bill for the amendment of the land laws generally or merely for the purposes of amending the rates.

* MR. SPEAKER said that the hon. Member appeared to be going somewhat beyond the scope of the Bill.

* MR. KEARLEY submitted that the argument was germane, as it was an illustration of the state of things which cropped up under the present law. The fact was that enormous advantages were derived at the expense of the community under existing conditions, but if this Bill were passed the land upon which all this had taken place would have to bear its share of taxation, and it would be impossible in future to hold land in the way complained of against the community in general. Devonport illustrated also the very worst effect of absenteeism. The whole of the revenue of the community in the shape of rent, to the amount of £80,000 a year, went to an absentee landlord who contributed nothing to the taxation of the place. The result was that a neighbourhood which ought to be prosperous and rich was very poor. He was amazed when he first went to the place to see how poor the tradespeople were compared with those in towns of a similar size. He could not then explain it, but as he became more thoroughly acquainted with the system in existence, and the abuses to which it gave rise, he began to apprehend what it was that brought about this state of affairs. The other day the municipality wanted to buy an additional piece of ground for the purpose of extending the Infectious Diseases Hospital. They originally erected it on a piece of ground bought from the lord of the manor for which they paid at the rate of £500 an acre. The additional piece of land required was offered to them at £1,500 an acre. This was an illustration in the direction of showing that the man who got the enormous enhancement contributed nothing to the local taxation. In granting the additional piece of land at

three times the price of the original portion the lord of the manor made it an absolute condition that if this site should at a later period be used for any purpose other than that of an infectious hospital the land should revert to him. This Bill was directed towards the amelioration of such a condition of things, and he believed the mere fact of levying a tax on land occupied or unoccupied would lessen the grip of the owner, and would throw the land more into use for the benefit of the community. It was the first step, in his judgment, in the direction of solving the housing problem, and of getting rid of overcrowding, and unless they passed some legislation of this kind they would never be able to grapple with the difficulty, the existence of which all admitted, and which he was sure all desired to ameliorate.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) remarked that this Bill was probably required even more in Ireland than in England, and he had been desired by an unanimous resolution of the Black-Rock Urban District Council, of which he was a member, to attend and support the Second Reading of the measure. In so doing he wished to urge the promoters to extend the Bill to Ireland. Why was Ireland always left out of this kind of remedial legislation? In almost the whole of the world, outside Ireland and England, ownership and occupation went together, and the difficulty with which this Bill proposed to deal did not arise. The measure had been clearly explained to the House; its provisions had been criticised by the legal subtlety of the hon. and learned Member opposite; and he suggested that it ought now to be referred to a Committee upstairs in order that its details might be threshed out. As an illustration of the condition of things which existed, he might say that Kingstown a hundred years ago was an agricultural holding, and the Government built a harbour there as being the most convenient place for communication with Holyhead. As soon as the harbour was built, the people began coming in, taking the land, and building houses. Thus a town grew up. In 1869 the township was started, and since then no less than £350,000 had been paid in town's rates, in addition to poor and other rates, of which the landlords paid nothing whatever. In May, 1903, all the leases fell in, and he was a living example of what had happened. The ground landlords came along, and took not only the houses which had been built——

***Mr. SPEAKER** pointed out that the hon. Member's remarks were outside the scope of the measure under discussion.

Mr. FIELD said the residents had contributed £350,000 in rates while the landlords had not contributed a shilling, but when the leases fell in the landlords seized all the property. He would not pursue the subject, but would conclude by repeating his request that the promoters of the Bill should extend its provisions to Ireland.

***Mr. WHITE RIDLEY** (Stalybridge) said he did not propose to follow the two preceding speakers into their interesting, but somewhat unfruitful disquisitions on land tenure in general, but the hon. Member for Devonport had made a series of statements with regard to a particular landlord in Devonport. A reference to *Hansard* would show that these statements had been explicitly and categorically denied by the agents of the particular landlord referred to.

***Mr. KEARLEY**: One of the hon. Gentlemen who gave a denial or rather defended the manorial system three years ago and is now a member of the Government told me a few days ago that what had come to his knowledge since then showed that I was thoroughly right and that he would never defend the system again.

***Mr. WHITE RIDLEY** said his complaint was that when the hon. Member gave his history of the matter, and no one knew of any subsequent proceeding, he did not refer to the fact that the accuracy of his version had been explicitly and categorically denied by the agent concerned.

***Mr. KEARLEY** asked what had been denied.

***Mr. WHITE RIDLEY** said the income was one thing. But the general history of the transactions had been denied by the agent of the particular landlord referred to.

*MR. KEARLEY: I have simply stated historical facts.

*MR. WHITE RIDLEY said he would not pursue the matter further with the hon. Member; he had not had time to refer to *Hansard*, but the statements to which he had alluded were to be found in the official *Debates*. It was an unimportant point, and did not really touch the principles of the Bill. He agreed that this was not a question which should be dealt with in a Party spirit. In fact, he could hardly conceive that this measure had been brought forward in a Party or any other spirit except that of desiring an academic debate on an interesting subject. In no other spirit could a Bill have been brought forward containing so many inconsistencies and carrying out in so incomplete a manner the objects its promoters professed to have in view. It was extremely difficult to find out what the objects of the promoters really were, because, as explained by the mover and by the seconder, they were totally different. The hon. Member for the Elland Division did not seem to have any particular pride in the child he had created this year; his hope was in the promise of its future, for he had said that as time went on and public opinion ripened, there would be an increase in the amount of money to be derived under the Bill, and that there might then be a higher rate. But the hon. Member for the West Derby Division of Liverpool put forward quite a different view, viz., that this was not a suggested tax on landlords and that it would not lead to any increase of taxation. The Bill had appeared three years running, each time in a different form; it had been rejected on each occasion, always to reappear in a new garb by which its promoters hoped to attract more votes to its support. He contended that these constant changes proved that public opinion on the subject had not yet reached a sufficiently crystallised state to enable a clear and definite conclusion to be arrived at. The real desire of the supporters of the Bill was probably to get at what was called "unearned increment." It would be easy to quote high authorities to the effect that unearned increment was not a proper subject of taxation, and that if unearned increment in land was a proper subject of taxation it followed that unearned increment in stocks and shares, and in other articles, was an equally proper subject of taxation. ["No."] On this point he would quote one authority which would carry weight with hon. Members opposite. On 26th February last, a writer in the *Daily Chronicle* said—

> "The phenomenon of 'unearned increments' is now widely recognised not to be confined to rises of land values, but to apply to gains derived from any superiority of economic opportunity."

Therefore, on the showing of the *Daily Chronicle*, if unearned increment of land was a proper subject of taxation, public opinion was now agreed that unearned increment arising from superiority of economic opportunity was equally a proper subject of taxation. The Bill proposed to tax the unearned increment of land, but of nothing else. The corollary to that was that if landowners were taxed on their unearned increment they ought to be compensated for their unearned decrement. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth, speaking at Oxford, used these words—

> "I shall not discuss with you the unearned increment of land. That is an idea so illogical, so unreasonable, so perfectly unjust, and so absolutely philosophical, that it does not require any refutation."

[Cries of "What date?"] That was in 1874. [OPPOSITION laughter]. He had yet to learn that opinions expressed in 1874 carried less weight than opinions expressed in 1846. At any rate, it would not be denied that hon. Gentlemen opposite attached considerable importance to views expressed in 1846 on another subject. But the whole idea upon which the taxation of the unearned increment of land rested was whether land could be valued separately from the houses upon it. The land could, of course, be valued separately, but could it be valued well? A valuer would put a value upon anything he was asked to value, but the valuation of land apart from the buildings gave a value of so hypothetical a character that, according to the Majority Report of the Royal Commission, it could not be relied upon. Not one of the experiments which had been made abroad or in the Colonies could be proved to have succeeded. ["Question."] He would not say that they could be proved to have failed; but he did say that they had not been in operation long enough to afford a satisfactory trial, and that there was a considerable body of opinion abroad which held that the experiment in the separate valuation of land had not been a success. With regard to the valuation of land in France, of which so much had been made, he might quote from *Justice*, the organ of the Social Democratic Federation. That paper concluded with these words an article in which it set forth at great length that the system of land taxation in Paris had acted to the detriment of that city—

> "The experiment has shown that the taxation of land values will not abolish landlordism, and may easily intensify its evils."

The same view was held in the Colonies, the United States, and other countries where the experiment had been tried. It was proposed to arrive at the separate taxation of land values by taking the capital value of the land. The very words of the Bill showed that that was a fictitious value, for it was there set forth that the value of the land should be "deemed" to be the sum of money which would be given "by a willing buyer to a willing seller." There would be neither a willing buyer nor a willing seller, and the value arrived at would be a fictitious, unreal, and artificial value. It was proposed to find out what the land, under circumstances which had not arisen, could be bought or sold at, and upon that value a tax of 3 per cent. was to be imposed. One might as well take the annual value of a picture which might or might not be sold at Christie's to-morrow. Land had no value until it came into the market, except on the regular system pursued in this country of taxing it according to the annual value to its possessor.

He fully sympathised with the desire to solve the housing problem, and he did not deny that a reform in the rating system was required. With regard to the housing question it had been conclusively shown in both the Majority and the Minority Reports of the Royal Commission that there was a grievance which could and ought to be remedied, viz., the system whereby, in London in particular, 20 per cent. reduction was made on the gross value of a hereditament in order to arrive at its net value. Obviously a 20 per cent. reduction on a hereditament, four-fifths of the value of which was in the land, pressed very unequally as compared with a corresponding reduction on a hereditament four-fifths of which was in houses. As the Majority Report pointed out, that particular grievance could be remedied by taking into account the actual circumstances of the case, without resorting to the cumbrous, unnecessary, and almost impossible process of making separate valuations of the land and of the buildings. Another question which could be easily dealt with was that of unoccupied land which was supposed to be ripe for buildings, and which it was supposed would be thrown into the market by the operation of this Bill. Doubtless there were cases which required to be dealt with. But in a great number of instances where land ripe for building remained unoccupied, it was due to the fact that mortgages on the property prevented the owner selling. If it could be shown that public benefit would really arise, compulsory sale of the land, a process of which instances could be seen every day, was available, although he admitted there was considerable danger in putting into the hands of municipalities unlimited powers for the purchase of land.

In regard to improvements of which the landowner was alleged to get the benefit without paying any of the rates caused thereby, a distinction should be drawn between improvements effected by the community and improvements which come through the natural course of time. In the case of the former, by a wise use of its powers a municipality could always secure the recoupment which it was right and proper the community should have. A municipality or other body carrying out an improvement had power to acquire land in the vicinity which would be benefited by the improvement, and to get for the community the increased value resulting therefrom, thus putting into the pocket of the general taxpayer the result of the improvement which had been carried out with the taxpayers' money. The operation of this Bill would be to make the building on vacant land a more and more speculative matter, because it would throw the burden of the rates more heavily upon the builder, thus entirely changing the character of house property, and making the incidence of the rates upon those who were inclined to deal in house property more uncertain and variable. The whole character of a class of investment the most sought after, both by the rich and by the poor, would be fundamentally altered. The Bill also proposed to deal with the unequal incidence of rates. Where did the promoters think the rates ought to fall—upon the occupier or upon the landlord? If the intention of the Bill was to make the landlord pay more visibly what he certainly paid invisibly now, why did it not do it more definitely? If that was the intention, why was there not some provision for the fuller representation of the landlord upon the local authority? One of the first principles in this matter was that those who paid taxes or rates should have due representation on the body by whom those taxes or rates were raised and spent. He conceived that the House would determinedly oppose the principle of taxation without representation encouraged by this Bill. Even if he knew the principle of the Bill to be as sound as he knew it to be unjust he could not vote for this measure, because the number of inconsistencies and absurdities it contained was so great that he did not believe any Committee could make it workable. He opposed it both on the ground of principle and on the ground of detail. The attack of the last three years upon the money which was supposed to go into the landlords' pocket, which began with an open and avowed attack on the ground landlords, had decreased year by year until it had reached the miserably insignificant proportions contained in this Bill, and it was obvious that the commonsense of the community need only carefully examine the measure to see how absurd it was and how unreal were the objects it aimed to secure.

MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.) said he did not intend to detain the House long, partly because they were already more than familiar with the main arguments on the one side and the other, but still more because his object was not so much to develop what he might call the controversial aspect of the question as to point out how large a measure of agreement had been come to, and to invite the Government to recognise the change in the situation. The Bill had been met by an Amendment which proposed to put it off on the ground that it dealt with a matter which ought not to be dealt with piecemeal, and which ought to wait until the whole subject of rating could be presented under some comprehensive Government scheme. But he could not help pointing out that during the lifetime of this Government that canon had been more than once violated by Bills dealing with the questions of agricultural rating and the tithe-rent charge. If special circumstances were alleged, and were deemed to be sufficient—he did not say they were adequate—for dealing with those questions in an exceptional manner, surely the same argument was applicable to the Bill now before the House. If they were to wait until a general and comprehensive measure of rating reform was introduced on the authority of the Government, or, indeed, anybody else, with any prospect of being carried into law, they would probably have to wait until the Greek Kalends. The Bill of his hon. friend, with which he was in hearty sympathy, was a modest, unpretentious step in the direction of a larger and more important reform of which many of them were in favour, and the fact that his hon. friend who introduced the Bill had behind him 200 of the great urban representative authorities was a very important fact in itself, as showing the general tendency of opinion; and he thought it was still more important from the practical point of view, because it meant that if the Bill was carried it would have behind it, not the reluctant consent, but the hearty goodwill of the very authorities on whose co-operation they must largely depend for carrying it into effect. As he understood the Bill—and it was the ground on which he supported it as a matter of principle—it embodied two propositions. The first was that all land ought to be rated at its real value, and the second was that for the purpose of carrying that object into effect there must be a separate assessment of the land and of the buildings. As regarded the first proposition, he did not believe, even after the able speech of the hon. Member for Stalybridge, that there was any real dispute among them. It rested on the simplest principles both of justice and of policy. Let them take one of the most elementary illustrations. Without going into the question of unearned increment, he would take the ordinary case where a community expended money out of its own resources, and therefore at the cost of the rates, for the purpose of a public improvement—the creation of a new street, the provision of an open space, a tunnel from one side of a river to another, or one of the hundred different objects by which a governing body improved the conditions of life. That improvement involved an annual burden on the rates. The effect was to increase the value, in nine cases out of ten, of all land adjacent to, or within the sphere of influence of, the improvement itself.

Mr. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): It may depreciate some of the land in the neighbourhood.

Mr. ASQUITH inquired if the hon. Member meant to suggest that a work like the Thames Embankment or any other great improvement did not necessarily have the effect, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, of enhancing the value.

Mr. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN: But you are going to put a rate on the hundredth case as well.

Mr. ASQUITH said that was just what they were not going to do, but the hon. Member had admitted that in nine cases out of ten at any rate the value of the land was enhanced by the expenditure of money which had to be provided by the ratepayers. If that land remained vacant or unoccupied, if the owner neglected to develop it or to exploit it for building purposes, that did not pay the same proportion of rating as land built upon. Then, again, when vacant land was requi ed for a public purpose, then, although it had not paid any equivalent portion of the rating burden for its enhancement of value, the community at whose expense the greater value had been created had to acquire it on the basis of its enhanced capital value. So long as the landowner could thus obtain an enhanced value for his land when required by the community without contributing anything to the cost of its enhancement they had a case of plain and indefensible injustice. The consideration of justice was not the only consideration involved. There was the consideration of public policy. No one had attempted to meet the argument put forward by the minority of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation as to the injurious effect of the present system on building operations as bearing on what was called the housing problem. There could be no doubt whatever that so long as the existing law of rating prevailed, building would be discouraged. The Royal Commission said that in the outskirts of a community where it was desirable to encourage it the effect of the present law was to discourage building. The experience of Queensland under a different law was illustrated by the report of the town clerk of Brisbane, that landowners had been induced to build more rapidly than before, with great benefit to the community and the general acquiescence of all concerned. What had happened there we might reasonably expect to happen here. Having regard to these facts it appeared to him that the first of the two principles which this measure embodied ought to receive the assent of the House.

With regard to the second question raised by the Bill, and he agreed that it was a very important one, *i.e.*, the practicability of separating the assessment of land from that of buildings, they were not moving in the atmosphere of theory, because they had got, in regard to the actual proposals of the Bill, the unanimous opinion of communities so widely separated in space, and so diverse in economic conditions, as Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, and, he supposed he might add, London.

Mr. REMNANT: No resolution has been passed by the London County Council in support of this Bill.

Dr. MACNAMARA: There was one in support of last year's Bill.

Mr. REMNANT: That was absolutely different.

Mr. ASQUTH said he was quite willing to leave London out of consideration. It was clear that all our great communities were committed to the practicability of this scheme. He would advise waiting to see what the new County Council's opinion would be, but was content with the endorsement of the towns he had mentioned, and with Bradford and Dublin. He understood the hon. Member for the Stretford Division to have admitted the practicability of separate rating. In New Zealand the law allowed an option to municipalities in this matter, and no fewer than fifty had exercised the option and only nine had refused. That was a sufficent proof that the thing could be worked. In the London suburb of Finchley an honest attempt had been made with the aid of skilled valuers to see how the scheme would work out there. The population of Finchley was 30,000. The present valuation was £160,000, of which £20,000 was estimated as the share attributable to land separated from buildings and improvements. A careful estimate had been made of the capital or selling value of the land alone. After deductions for the shrinkage which would undoubtedly take place in the value of the land consequent on its being brought into rating, and after allowance for all other relevant considerations, the conclusion arrived at was that the capital or selling value of the land of that district would amount to £1,874,000. Three per cent. on that—the figure named in this Bill—would mean £56,000 a year as the actual rateable value of the land. As land at present paid £20,000, this would be an addition of £36,000 to the annual rateable value of the district. The result, translated into terms of rates, would be this—that whereas the rate at present paid was 8s. 2d. in the pound, it would be reduced to 6s. 3d.

An. HON. MEMBER: What is going to happen to the land in the meantime? You could not get purchasers for it all at that price.

Mr. ASQUITH said he was informed that the valuation had been put lower than the prices being actually realised from day to day and week to week in the open market. The point was, was th land ripe for residential purposes? But he did not think he need go further into details. A *prima facie* case for the practicability of the scheme having been made out, he appealed to the Government to allow the Bill to be read a second time, leaving its details to be examined in Committee. He certainly hoped the House would, that afternoon, not lose the opportunity afforded it by that debate of affirming the principle which lay at the root of the Bill.

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Grant Lawson, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) said the right hon. Gentleman had appealed to the Government to give the Bill a Second Reading. The matter, however, did not rest with the Government, which was disposed to leave it to the decision of the House; but that being so, he would venture to offer a few reasons why the House should carefully consider what it would be doing if it passed the Second Reading. He had the highest respect for the local authorities who had been quoted; but a conference of rating authorities would be more than human if they did not see some advantages in a proposal which would enable them to send some of their increasing bills to be paid by a more limited class of owners. It was only natural that they should do so. Tax collectors were not the best authorities to consult on the principles upon which taxes should be levied. In that House they had to consider the views of minorities as well as of majorities It was not an abstract Resolution which the House was asked to discuss, but a Bill. They were not merely asked to express a pious opinion that something should be done in this matter. With the feeling that some relief ought to be given to ratepayers he most thoroughly coincided, but no shifting of burdens from one ratepayer to another would ever deal with that which was the real *crux* of the matter. That was dealt with by the Amendment rather than by the Bill. In certain ignorant classes of the community the opinion prevailed that when there was something wrong with them they ought so take something, no matter what; but he desired to submit the dose they were now asked to swallow to a somewhat critical analysis. Three new principles would be introduced by this Bill into the law and practice of rating—first, that there should be a separation for valuation purposes between a site and the building which stood on it; secondly, that rates should be placed on unoccupied houses; and, thirdly, that there should be taxation not on the actual annual value, but on the estimated capital value applied to one class of rateable property alone—land in what were technically known as urban districts in this country. The right hon. Gentleman had mentioned New Zealand, but he disputed altogether the similarity of the conditions in this country and New Zealand. He wished to show that what was now dealt with as one indivisible whole was divided by this Bill into two distinct parts, and this separation proposal was justly described by the Royal Commission as uncertain, complicated, and costly. Those were unpleasant characteristics for a basis of taxation under which heavy burdens were to be placed upon one class of individuals. [AN HON. MEMBER: That is the Majority Report.] Yes, and when he quoted anything as representing the views of the Commission, it would be from the Majority Report. As regarded the rating of vacant houses, this would take from those who had not tenants for the benefit of those whose houses were occupied. The levying of an annual tax on the capital value of one class of property alone was opposed to all principles of local taxation in this or any other country.

He agreed, and the Government entirely agreed, that all property should pay on its full value for public purposes, but that was in the Amendment, not in the Bill. He would take the last point first. What would be the result of taxing this land—the whole area of such land in an urban district—on what the Bill called its "annual value." The basis of annual charges ought to be as now, the annual advantage received by the owner or occupier. He dared say there were hon. Members who had the misfortune to hold investments on which they were receiving no dividend. How would they like the Chancellor of the Exchequer to levy taxation on the estimated capital value of those investments? That was the treatment which the Bill proposed to mete out to owners of land in urban districts. Land in the suburbs now in occupation of nurserymen, allotment holders, butchers and others, and rated on the annual value for the purposes for which it was used, would under this Bill be rated at its value for a purpose for which it was not being used. He had heard of a holding in an urban district let at £3 a year for grazing. Under this Bill it would be rated at £15 a year. What would happen to private gardens and to some of the gardens in public squares? The whole of the lungs of our big towns would be choked by this method. No man could afford to keep open spaces in a town if rated at 3 per cent. on the capital value of the land. The evil of crowding houses together would be intensified. Trades requiring large pieces of ground, such as the timber trade, would have to migrate from the urban districts and extra costs for carriage would be placed on their goods. In many cases it was necessary for workmen to live near their work and rents would rise enormously on account of this enormous increase in rates which must necessarily take place. He would give to the House another concrete instance of a person who held a lease for sixty years of a poor house on a very valuable site. Under this Bill he would have to be rated on the capital value of that site just as if he had built upon it a palace, and as if it had been put to the best use it could possibly be put either for a palace or for a magnificent residence, although his interest in the site only consisted of a very poor house. Those were absolute cases that would occur under this Bill. Was there any reason for this drastic treatment of those who owned land and had not put it to the most remunerative purposes. He would take the most extreme case which had excited most interest, namely, the case of a plot of land in the centre of a town unoccupied by buildings. He did not know where such plots existed unless they contained notice boards offering to let or sell them. Such plots of land did not by existing there put any direct charge upon the ratepayers. They did not require policing, the maintenance of roads, or tramways and they had nothing to do with education because there were no people upon them to enjoy those advantages. If they accepted the principle that such plots of land ought to be rated in proportion to the benefits they received, upon that ground there was obviously no reason why such land should be rated. He should like to ask whether it was true that the existence of this land in an undeveloped state put an indirect charge upon other ratepayers? A vacant plot of land was the cause of no direct or indirect charge upon the rates; and if the neighbouring owner who built a house on his plot had a slight grievance in the matter of rates, on the other hand the owner of the house and plot had the value of his property increased by the absence of a competing house. Land might or might not rise in value as building developed, but the rise was certainly not due to increase in rates. As the population of a town increased property became more valuable; but so also the shopkeeper did more business and other classes had more employment; but it was not proposed that they should pay 3 per cent. on the advantages they received from increase of population. Then there was the proposal to rate empty houses which all owners of property knew were a most costly form of property.

Mr. TREVELYAN: My proposal is to rate the land and not the house.

Mr. GRANT LAWSON said it was very difficult to separate the two. It could not be said that a vacant house involved no charge on the rates, as was the case with vacant land; but the remarkable logic of the Bill would place the rate not upon the structure, which required police protection and other services, but upon the site that did not. If a charge were placed on empty houses, undoubtedly to some extent a check would be placed on the willingness of people to build houses for the future, and rents would be in proportion to the added cost. A builder built a house which he let on the understanding that the tenant paid the rates, taking the risk of their rise or fall—a convenient arrangement universally adopted; but the Bill comtemplated that the builder's income should be liable during the term of a lease to decrease from change in the rate of the land upon which his house stood. If the Bill was to work at all, it would be necessary to assign separate annual values to the house and the site for rating purposes. It was obvious there could be no actual value, because the site could not be used for any other purpose. The annual value the Bill suggested was 3 per cent. on the capital value, if there was a willing purchaser and a willing seller. Present assessment committees did their work cheaply and on the whole well, because they dealt with things actually in existence and subject to everyday transactions; but they could not be expected to enter the wide field of conjecture and imagination for future valuation without expert assistance. The experts would be asked to say with respect to every house in an urban district what would be the saleable value of the site of a house if the house were not there, and the land were devoted to the best possible use to which it could be put. That in itself was startling; but the problem became still more complicated when it was remembered that there were rights and covenants attached to leases, and the valuer would have to consider the effect of these restrictions without access to the documents governing them or the legal knowledge for their interpretation. What was the value of a valuer's opinion? This point had been very well defined by the late Lord Farrer, who pointed out that the only value of a valuer's valuation rested on his experience, and it was the valuer's experience of previous transactions in regard to similar duties that guided his judgment. Therefore the value of a valuer's opinion lay in his experience; but since the world began nobody has had experience of such a problem as was presented, but upon the reliability of uncertain valuation would depend the relative proportions of the rating burdens of every citizen. Never was there a suggestion that more violated every principle laid down as the basis of taxation by every writer since Adam Smith, that taxation should be certain and not arbitrary. It used to be maintained that ground-rents should be subject to taxation, though less had been heard of that since small investors had begun to take an interest in the question, and, whatever might be said against the proposal, at least the amount would be ascertainable; but here everything was to depend on valuation by a man, having no experience of similar transactions, of the hypothetical value of a hypothetical commodity, if that were put to a hypothetical use by a hypothetical purchaser. The Royal Commission said that the system would be not only complicated but uncertain and costly. He would give the House some idea of the cost. The hon. Member for Islington had tried to sweep away all the arguments of the Royal Commission by saying that the witnesses gave such divergent estimates of the cost that it need not be considered at all. It was true that in London the estimates varied from £40,000 to £2,000,000, though one valuer, Mr. Harper, said he was willing to value at the rate of a shilling a site, exclusive of costs of litigation. These litigation costs would no doubt be considerable.

*Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): But the work would be done by the corporation officials.

Mr. GRANT LAWSON said that in that case he was inclined to think that the ratepayers would object to the work being done by the corporation officials, for the suggestion not only showed that the local authorities would levy the duties, but fix the amount themselves. What they gained in surveyors' fees they would lose in law fees. Mr. Wainwright had put the cost at several millions for sites in London if experts were employed, and the cost of litigation might be as much as the cost of the valuation. In the area over which the Bill would extend it was estimated that in respect of rateable hereditaments in the shape of houses the Bill proposed to put a charge of £10,000,000 on the local authorities in order to arrive at a valuation, and after that there came the law costs. For what would all this great expense be incurred? The only suggestion was that deductions could be more easily made from the gross value to the rateable; but that difficulty could be overcome under the present system. The Bill, however, was only a part of the ultimate scheme which hon. Members opposite desired to see carried. The right hon. Gentleman said it was a modest, unambitious start. But this annual measure disclosed less and less of the mind of those who were behind it, in order that the House might possibly be induced to accept the larger scheme in time. He warned his hon. friends that once they accepted a Bill like this they would find it very hard to secure a logical foothold which should hinder them from going still further down the incline. Would right hon. Gentlemen opposite not only not support this Bill but actively oppose the candidates of their Party who were prepared to go beyond its terms? If he went into the details of the Bill he could very speedily show how entirely unworkable the measure was. The Bill was not only unworkable, but it touched only a little corner of a very large question. Some of its principles were ridiculous and impossible, and it ran counter to the decision of one Commission and one Committee which had considered the question for years, and whose majorities had decided against such proposals. It was objected that the Government did not carry out the Reports of Royal Commissions; but it would be a new departure to carry out a measure which was absolutely opposed to their findings.

Some of his hon. friends would no doubt vote for the Bill because they thought that something should be done to tax those who held this one commodity of land for a rise. They might hold everything else for a rise, but they must not hold land. He believed there were some cases of hardship in connection with this matter, but was it worth while to use all this machinery to inflict injury on many innocent persons for the sake of catching one or two individuals. He did not think those cases were nearly as common as some people believed. Lord Balfour, with the best intention, hunted for cases of land which was supposed to be kept off the market for a rise in price, but he reported that that was not very usual, although, of course, there were cases. Though something ought to be done to deal with those cases, surely it could not be argued that the method of securing a remedy was by this Bill with all its absurdities. He sympathised with the desire to relieve the heavy burdens on the ratepayers, but, in his judgment, they would be much heavier if the Bill were adopted, and if the local authorities were allowed to imagine that they had discovered something like a new gold mine. Though the burdens of the ratepayers should be fairly adjusted in proportion to the capacity of those who had to bear them, the end was not to be attained by means of this Bill. The Amendment, on the contrary, rather expressed his view and he would vote for it in the hope that his hon. friends would take the same course. By supporting the Amendment his hon. friends would be voting for the true and salutary remedy of a real grievance felt by the ratepayers, while rejecting a quack proposal containing dangerous elements. This was a difficult problem, and they all desired a remedy which would touch the spot. By his analysis of the Bill he had shown at any rate that it contained principles which could not be worked out to a satisfactory conclusion. If any suggestion were made to the House which they could consider, and which did contain the terms of a settlement, he for one would welcome it and give it every sort of consideration. What he did not want was that the House, by passing the Second Reading of this Bill, should commit itself to the opinion that this was the proper remedy for meeting evils which they all deplored.

*MR. LAWSON WALTON (Leeds, S.) said the Secretary to the Local Government Board began his speech by stating that the Government was disposed to leave the decision of the Second Reading of this Bill to the unbiassed judgment of the House. But that statement was the preface to what he presumed might be called the official opinion of the Department which the hon. Gentleman represented with reference to the measure. The House had now ascertained that this Bill was officially regarded as objectionable in principle, as impossible in its application, and as so dangerous to the future of this country that the hon. Gentleman described it as the first step towards the introduction of the doctrines of Socialism. The hon. Gentleman warned his hon. friends behind him that if they once put their foot on this slippery plane there would be no stopping until they were launched in the abyss to which he referred. The House had heard speeches in opposition to the Bill, but no one had risen so endowed with the gift of prophecy of evil as the Secretary of the Local Government Board. It had been admitted that the Bill was conspicuous for its moderation, that it indicated an evil of considerable compass, and that it pointed to a remedy. He should like to deal briefly with the objections urged against the principle of the Bill. It was acknowledged that in each large rateable area there was land which had benefited by the public improvements, which was increasing in annual value as the result of the growth of the inhabitants of the district, and which was contributing in no way to the advantages it was receiving. If that was so the question for consideration was: Why should it not contribute some return in the shape of taxation for the public benefits of which the owner was the recipient? His hon. and learned friend the Member for the Stretford Division said this was a new principle in the law of rating. He challenged that proposition. If it was said it was a new principle in this sense, that the hereditament it was proposed to rate was not fairly within the scope of the rating law as now administered, he agreed; but it clearly was a proper subject for rating. It was fixed and real property, it was within the local area, it called for services which were rendered to it by the local authority and it participated in the advantages which followed from local government, and therefore it might fairly be assessed. The fact simply was that it had slipped out of rating, and a moment's study of the development and growth of the law of rating would show how that mishap had occurred.

We had adopted as the measure of the valuation of land the value of the occupation of land, and in order to ascertain the value of the occupation of land we had assumed a hypothetical tenant, and therefore the existence of some tenancy was the basis of property subject to assessment. But in principle land, whether in fact occupied or not, should be equally rated provided it participated, just as the property occupied participated, in the advantages of local government and created a call upon the local administration of the district. Although that proposition would scarcely be denied, yet, in practice, unoccupied land had escaped because there was no application of the standard of valuation which had been applied to the subject. The value of land was the price at which at any moment a man could dispose of the property in the open market for money; that was to say, if a man had a piece of land which he could exchange for £1,000, and he preferred to keep it rather than exchange it for that amount, he was foregoing the annual and fair interest which he could obtain on this sum. Three per cent. was presumed to be the annual value of the money, and therefore the Bill said that the annual value of the property should be taken as the annual value of the amount at which the owner at any moment might exchange the property. He thought he had made it clear that, if the main proposition was right, the owner of the land ought to contribute to the local taxation and not be absolutely free. They had here a fair standard by which they could ascertain the value of the property, and by which they could measure the annual value to the owner. If it was worth the owner's while to forego the interest on £1,000 for a period of years, it was obvious that the land had a value to him in the shape of some prospective profit which he would obtain by the growth of the neighbourhood in which the land was situated. Ought that or ought that not to contribute to local taxation? He had not heard any sound argument adduced against it. He had heard it said that arguments of policy were against it. He had heard it said that the result of the application of the Bill would be to force all the open spaces into the market. Would not that be an advantage to the community? If open spaces were forced into the market, land would be more widely held, there would be more owners of property, there would be greater freedom in handling it, and greater freedom in dealing with it; and that was more conducive to the advantage of the community than that tracts of unoccupied land should remain in the hands of single persons who were subject to no burden, and who got without any contribution all the advantages which attended the development of the area. This Bill proposed to bring unoccupied land within the scope of our rating law by introducing, not a hypothetical tenant but a hypothetical purchaser. If they had a hypothetical purchaser they got a standard of value which was quite as accurate as if they had a hypothetical tenant and no more difficult of application.

The fear that they would encourage building which was not wanted was chimerical. He agreed that what was proposed would force land into the market, for there were many owners who could not hold; but it was wrong to say that buildings would be put up which were not wanted. If land was more widely held there would be a more ready response to the demand for building accommodation than under any other system. Let him deal with the fallacy with which the Secretary to the Local Government Board tried to frighten them, namely, the prospect of all the London squares being built over. The answer was that these open spaces were rated at this moment. [AN HON. MEMBER: Not on capital value.] Let him instance Belgrave Square. If they rated that square they would diminish *pro tanto* the rateability of the remainder of the hereditaments not included in the open space. The only difference was that under the present system they rated both. They rated the hereditament which was occupied, namely, the house in the square, the rateability of which was increased by the fact that one of the incidents of that occupation was the right of using the open space in front. That added to the value of the house in the square, and therefore if they took the square separately and capitalised it, and took the rateable value at 3 per cent., they would no doubt get a separate subject of assessment altogether; that was to say, they would have an assessment on so much of that open space as was detached from the house, but they would *pro tanto* diminish the rateability of the house. [AN HON. MEMBER: No.] Logically they would do that, because the present subject of rating was the house plus the incident and advantage of being able to use the open space.

Unoccupied houses at this moment were not rated at all, but he would show that what was proposed by the Bill was not a new principle. He had the curiosity to get the Acts relating to the government of the city of London, and he found that there, by special legislation, all unoccupied houses were rated to the extent of one-half of the rates in respect to the sewer rate and other rates. He was told that in the case of some estates in London—in St. Pancras, for example—a similar rule had been applied. Really this Bill was a very mild application of this principle. The Bill proposed to treat unoccupied houses as land. They would not cease to be rated as land because there were houses upon it which happened to be unoccupied. Therefore the application of the measure in that case was simply the logical pursuit of the principle that they must follow the land wherever it was. They must annually ascertain the value by the application of this principle. It might vary from year to year. If land was going up in value by the development of the neighbourhood they would get increased rateability, and if the value was going down, owing to reasons applicable to the locality, they would get decreased rateability. These were views which he trusted would satisfy the House that this was a perfectly logical and simple measure, and that really there had been no answer to the arguments brought forward by its promoters.

MR. STOCK (Liverpool, Walton) said he should not have intervened in the debate had it not been for the speech of the seconder of the Bill, his hon. friend the Member for the West Derby Division of Liverpool. He would not like the House to suppose, as it might, that this Bill had the support of the various corporate bodies of Liverpool outside the municipal authorities. He believed it received the sanction of the Finance

Committee of the Corporation of Liverpool by a small majority, but there were other important bodies in Liverpool who were strongly opposed to it. He held in his hand a letter from the Mersey Dock Board who opposed the Bill and he would read a few sentences. It said—

> "This Bill proposes to empower local authorities to levy rates on land values altogether differing from the basis on which the rateable value of such land is now ascertained. It appears to be the intention of the Bill to assess both occupied and unoccupied land on a percentage of some assumed value. If passed, the Bill will seriously handicap and affect bodies like this Board who own a large estate used for the benefit of the public trading to and at the port of Liverpool, and who, in anticipation of the growing wants of the trade of the port committed by Parliament to their care, have acquired land for future development."

He had to oppose this Bill on principle for the reasons given by the hon. Member for the Stretford Division, and he was glad to feel that his action was endorsed by so important a body as the Dock Board of Liverpool.

Sir GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said that as this was a matter that deeply concerned London he desired to say a word or two upon it. He could not agree with what fell from the Secretary to the Local Government Board. The Bill, as it stood, seemed to divide rating between the land and the buildings. He thought it was a very conservative measure. There were many people who were under the impression that land did not bear its fair share of taxation. He did not agree with that view, and he thought it would be an advantage to levy taxation in such a way that it would show on the face of it the sources from which it was derived. He could not see anything revolutionary in the Bill, though no doubt certain parts were capable of amendment in Committee. Whether 3 per cent. was the right figure to name was a detail which was not important at this stage of the Bill. He thought it would conduce very much to the greater contentment of the ratepayers of London if the two rates were separated. His own opinion was that hon. Members would be disappointed if they thought the proposed change would lead to a large increase of rateable property. He thought, however, it would do a great deal to do away with the existing idea that the ground landlord did not pay a fair share of taxation. He could not regard this as a Party measure in any sense, and therefore he would support the Second Reading.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 223; Noes, 156. (Division List No. 52.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William

Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellice,Capt E. C(SAndrw'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Sir F. H. (Maidstone)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster,Sir Michael(Lond. Univ.
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (Berwick
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hatch Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope,J. F.(Sheffield,Brightside
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones,DavidBrynmor(Swansea
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon.Frederick Wm.
Langley, Batty
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese,Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Morley,Rt.Hon.John(Montrose
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P.(Galway, N.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James, F. X.(Cork)
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary,Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Doherty, William
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James(Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Pease, Herbt. Pike (Darlington
Pemberton, John S. G.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Randles, John S.
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William Clare
Reid, James (Greenock)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie(Dumfries
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R(Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Toulmin, George
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Wallace, Robert
Walton, John Lawson (Leeds,S.
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Weir, James Galloway
Whiteley,H.(Ashton und. Lyne
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Fred W. (Norfolk, Mid.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse,SirJ.T.(Huddersf'd
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Trevelyan and Mr. Watson Rutherford.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex.F.
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.HughO.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon.SirH.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour,Captain C. B. (Hornsey
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor
Bathurst, Hon, Allen Benjamin
Beach,Rt.Hn.Sir Michael Hicks
Bentick, Lord Henry C.
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith

Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles,Lt.-Col.H.F.(Middlesex
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Campbell, Rt.Hn.J.A(Glasgow)
Campbell,J.H.M.(Dublin Univ.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain,Rt.Hn.J.A (Worc
Chaplain, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Coddington, Sir William
Colomb,SirJohn Charles Ready
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield
Dimsdale,Rt.Hon.SirJoseph C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland,SirFred D'xon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke,Rt.Hon.Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Gore,Hn.G.R.C Ormsby-(Salop
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Grenfell, William Henry
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford,W.)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier,Hon. James HenryCecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway,Rt.Hon. Sir JohnH.
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kerr, John
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Lawson,JohnGrant(Yorks.N.R
Lee,ArthurH.(Hants.,Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Colonel A.R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas,Reginald J.(Portsmouth
Maconochie, A. W.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell,Rt HnSirH.E.(Wigt'n
Maxwell, W.J.H.(Dumfriessh.)
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milner, Rt.Hon. SirFrederickG.
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col.Thos. Myles
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Edward Jas.(Somerset
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'dUniv.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent,Col.Sir C.E.H(Sheffield
Walrond, Rt.Hn. SirWilliamH.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby,Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.
Wharton Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Remnant and Mr. Matthew Ridley.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed."

And, it being after half-past Five of the clock, and objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Friday next.

NEW BILL.

TIED HOUSES (FREEING).

Bill to secure freedom for holders of licences for the sale of intoxicating liquor, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Rea, Mr. Thomson, Mr. Yoxall, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Layland-Barratt, Mr. Bell, Mr. Soares, and Mr. Rigg.

TIED HOUSES (FREEING) BILL.

"To secure freedom for holders of licences for the sale of intoxicating liquor," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 125.]

Adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 14*th March*, 1904.

PETITION.

MARQUESS OF SLIGO.

Petition of Henry Ulick, Marquess of Sligo, Earl of Altamont, Viscount Westport of Westport, in the county of Mayo, and Baron of Monteagle, in the same county, in the Peerage of Ireland, and Baron Monteagle of Westport, in the county of Mayo, in the Peerage of the United Kingdom, claiming a right to vote at the election of Representative Peers for Ireland; read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House.

NEW PEER.

The right hon. John Adrian Louis Earl of Hopetoun, K.T., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., having been created Marquess of Linlithgow, in the county of Linlithgow or West Calder, was (in the usual manner) introduced.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Young and Bell's Patents Bill [H.L.]; London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill [H.L.]; Govan Burgh (Electricity) Bill [H.L.]; Appleby Corporation Gas Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Whitby Gas Bill; Hampden-in-Arden Gas Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee adjourned this day at Twelve o'clock.

Middlesborough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thorley Tramways Bill; Bristol Tramways (Extensions) Bill [H.L.]; North Wales Electric Power Bill [H.L.]. Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next.

Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Duke of Manchester and the Lord Barnard be proposed to the House as members of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Duke of Bedford and the Earl Fitzwilliam, and that the Lord Barnard be Chairman of the said Committee; read, and agreed to.

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES (Lord Balfour of Burleigh): My Lords, the Regulations standing in my name on the Paper are the ordinary ones usually passed about this time of the session dealing with Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills. I beg to move that they be agreed to.

Moved, "That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Thursday the 16th day of June next. That no Provisional Order Confirmation Bill originating in this House shall be read a first time after Tuesday the 3rd day of May next. That no Provisional Order Confirmation Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Thursday the 16th day of June next. That when a Bill shall have passed this House with Amendments these orders shall not apply to any new Bill sent up from the House of Commons which the Chairman of Committees shall report to the House is substantially the same as the Bill so amended. That this House will not receive any petition for a Private Bill later than Tuesday the 3rd day of May next, unless such Private Bill shall have been approved by the High Court of Justice; nor any petition for a Private Bill approved by the High Court of Justice after Friday the 6th day of May next. That this House will not receive any report from the Judges upon petitions presented to this House for Private Bills after Friday the 6th day of May next.—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Ordered, That the said orders be printed and published, and affixed on the doors of this House and Westminister Hall. (No. 32.)

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3125. Belgium (Shipping, and Navigation of Antwerp); Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 9th March, 1904, declaring that Alfred W. Harman, hammerman, Royal Laboratory, War Office, was appointed without a civil service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his Department.

Treasury Minute, dated 10th March, 1904, declaring Nanking to be an unhealthy place within the meaning of the Superannuation Act, 1876.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

To meet To-morrow at Four o'clock.

NEW BILL.

SUNDAY CLOSING (SHOPS) BILL.

A Bill to provide for the closing of shops on Sunday—Was presented by the Lord Avebury; read 1^a; to be printed, and to be read 2^a on Tuesday, the 26th of April next. (No. 31.)

THE FISCAL QUESTION.

*THE EARL OF WEMYSS: My Lords, I rise to move that an humble Address be presented to His Majesty praying him to appoint a small Commission to inquire into, and report upon, the present state and prospects of our trade, and whether any change of methods or other action is needed in furtherance thereof. I think I owe your Lordships an apology for having so frequently put off this notice, but I did so at the request of a distinguished Member of your Lordships' House who is friendly to the object of my Motion, and in the belief that the Government would perhaps accept this Motion. But, so far from that being the case, I believe they have sent out a three-line whip, which is about the full extent to which they can sjambok their supporters, in opposition to the appointment of this Commission. My Motion is short but comprehensive, and takes in the whole question. When I first placed this notice upon the Paper, I chanced to meet a friend of mine, a Member of your Lordships' House, who put this question to me, "In what sense are you bringing this Motion forward? Do you bring it forward in the sense of free trade or protection?" My answer to him was, that I brought it forward, not in the sense either of free trade or of protection, but in the sense of common sense. I shall then endeavour to put this Motion before your Lordships simply as a question of common sense in dealing with a business matter, and I can promise that I shall not enter into a discussion of the fiscal question. I shall not quote from Adam Smith in favour of free trade, nor shall I read extracts from the speeches of Sir Howard Vincent to show the blessings of protection. As I have said, I shall confine myself strictly to the business point of view in the matter.

Let me review the situation. What was the state of things in England fifty-eight years ago which led to the repeal of the Corn Laws? We then had famine in Ireland, famine in Scotland, and agricultural wages in the southern counties of England were eight shillings a week. This state of things rendered action such as was proposed, it seemed to me, absolutely necessary. I myself was in Parliament at that time, and I felt that I could not oppose this measure. I had been elected in 1841 as a protectionist and as a defender of the sliding scale *versus* Lord John Russell's fixed duty. Owing to my pledges I resigned my seat, rather than oppose the measure; and, luckily for me, in less than a year I came back again to Parliament as Member for my own county in Scotland, unfettered and with a clean slate, which I have endeavoured to keep clean during the years which have since elapsed. What was expected from the repeal of the Corn Laws? I turn to the Gracious Speech of that noble lady and great Queen whose memory is ever dear to us. I find in the Queen's Speech of 1846, which was read by the Lord Chancellor of the day, by Commission, these words:—

> "Her Majesty trusts that you will be rewarded by witnessing the beneficial results of the measures which have been sanctioned by Her Majesty for the present relaxation and ultimate repeal of protective duties on corn and sugar. Her Majesty entertains a confident hope that the more free admission of the produce of foreign countries into the home market will increase the comforts and better the condition of the great body of the people."

Have the hopes thus graciously expressed by Her Majesty been realised? I own myself that, until May last, I was under the impression that they had been in great measure realised; that our trade and commerce had increased, that our Empire had grown in strength and unity, and that the general well-being of the people—though the poor, I am afraid, we shall always have with us—had risen considerably compared to what it was at the time the Corn Laws were repealed.

I venture to think that I was not alone in that opinion and that it was shared by many in this country. But it appears that we were all dwelling in darkness, for suddenly, in the month of May last, a light was sprung upon us from Birmingham which showed that everything was wrong, that our trade and commerce were going to the dogs, and that if we did not do something pointed out by that light, we should sink into the condition of a fifth-rate Power. That certainly astonished me, and what one naturally wants to know is, What is the nature of that light? Radium is a wonderful light. It can penetrate and make its influence felt, so it is said, through two feet of polished granite, but that is nothing to this light from Birmingham. For what has this light from Birmingham done? It has smelted a Government and reduced the great Unionist Party to a state of flux. Now, what I want to know is the nature of this light, whether it is a true light and one in which we can place trust—whether it is a light like that of our great lighthouses, which shows the trader rocks to be avoided and points out to him the direction in which he can safely steer, or whether it is a light of a very different description. I recollect many years ago seeing a light burning on the Table of the House of Commons. It was a stearin candle made from Irish bog, and Lord Shaftesbury—the great Lord Shaftesbury of factory fame—was speaking in favour of regenerating Ireland by turning the bogs into stearin candles. At the present time this regeneration is sought by this Government to be effected through the expropriation of the Irish landlords. But the object of Lord Shaftesbury came to nothing. The candle was not worth the game, because, I believe, it took about an acre of bog to make a candle. When I came into the House, Mr. Shiel, that most eloquent of Irishmen, was standing at the Bar. I went up to him and said, "Shiel, what do you think of this?" and he replied, "I think it is very much like an *ignis fatuus*." What, then, we want to know is whether this Birmingham light is like the light of our lighthouses, or whether it is an *ignis fatuus* or bog light. It is only through a Commission such as I ask for—a small independent Commission—that we can get at the true facts, because all the speeches that we hear and read on this question, delivered both in Parliament and on platforms, are more or less coloured by Party feeling and are not to be trusted as safe guides.

Now what is the position of the Government? Does their policy throw light on the situation? Does it show that it is based upon inquiry and full knowledge? I am afraid it does not. There is much that I should like to say about the Government's policy, but I shall abstain from saying it. I do not desire to speak a single unkind word of the Prime Minister. He is a great personal friend of mine and my county neighbour, and I abstain then from saying much that I would otherwise say. But as to the policy of the Government, I will take what was said by the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty. In answer to Lord Salisbury, Lord Selborne declined to give details of a policy which, he said, was "not yet born." Those were his actual words. I will assume that this policy is not yet born, and will not, therefore, go into the question of retaliation, which it is supposed to mean, nor consider what a retaliatory policy means, whether it will stop there, or whether when this policy is born retaliation will appear as a little bantling of the election, or whether retaliation will come into life coupled, like a Siamese twin, with protection. I pass that by. But on Wednesday last we had a distinct statement from the Prime Minister as to what the Government's policy really is. Replying to Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister said—

> "The right hon. Gentleman asked me in the early part of his speech whether I adhered to the view that the fiscal programme of the Government involved a fundamental change in the policy pursued by this country for the last two generations. In my opinion it does involve that."

My Lords, that seems to me to go further than retaliation. It may, or it may not; but, at any rate, what we want to know is whether the proposals which are to make a fundamental change in the policy pursued by this country for the last two generations are founded upon full inquiry and full knowledge of whatever is available in the shape of information on this vital question. My impression is that it is not so founded.

When the Education Bill came up two years ago I wanted to know something about technical education in this country as compared with technical education abroad, and I was told to go to the Board of Trade. I went to the Board of Trade and received from Sir Alfred Bateman, head of the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade, two Blue-books. One of the those Blue-books was up to the year 1898, and in it were contained the reports made by our Consular officers on the state of our trade throughout the world. There are, I think, 171 of these reports, and also accompanying them were Sir Alfred Bateman's conclusions. The word "tariff" is not mentioned. The Blue-book was published before tariff protection was, last May, so suddenly and unexpectedly sprung upon us. The only question then was, whether our trade was in a prosperous condition or not, and these were the ordinary routine Blue books issued by the Board of Trade. In the Blue-book of 1898 Sir Alfred Bateman says—

> "The reports indicate that the following are some of the causes which are considered as tending to place British trade at a disadvantage in those districts where, especially of late years, foreign competition has been more than usually keen."

The Earl of Wemyss.

He places them under six heads:—

> (1) The disinclination of British traders—(a) to supply a cheaper class of goods; (b) to be content with a small order at first; (c) to study a customer's wishes; (d) to adopt the metric system in calculations of weights, cost, etc.; (e) to grant credit facilities.
>
> (2) The scarcity of British commercial travellers, in comparison with those of other nationalities, their ignorance of the language of the countries they visit, and the endeavour to supply their place by a lavish distribution of catalogues and other matter printed in English only.
>
> (3) The inferiority of the British to the German and American methods of packing.
>
> (4) The additional cost of goods caused by the high rates of freight on British lines of steamers.
>
> (5) The frequency of strikes in the United Kingdom tending to cause uncertainty in the delivery of orders.

I believe the last named to be one of the most potent causes in placing our trade at a disadvantage, but, for reasons best known to themselves, both Parties avoid touching upon the question of the influence of trades unions on industry. I hold in my hand a book published by Mr. John Murray, containing a reprint of *The Times* articles on "The Crisis in British Industry," by Mr. Edwin A. Pratt, with introductory letters. In one of the letters, which appears on page 7, I read this most astounding statement:

> "A member of the present Government was asked if a little elementary political economy might be taught in our schools; but his answer was that the whole body of trades unionists would be up in arms against it."

I hope that this brave member of the Government does not sit in your Lordships' House; it is more probable that he sits in the other House. It is regrettable that the brave men who govern us — I include both Parties, for they are all tarred with the same brush—dare not deal with this subject. When Mr. Vince, of Birmingham, was approached as to the reasons he gave for the state of our trade, and was asked why the question of trades unions had never been touched upon, he replied that it did not come within the range of practical politics at the present time. Yet this is one of the main causes why our trade is not in all respects what it might be. The sixth reason given by Sir A. Bateman is as follows—

> (6) The development of technical education in Germany, and the greater attention paid in

schools to modern languages, added to the system of sending young Germans all over the world to acquire a practical knowledge of the language, business habits, etc., of other countries, by means of which they are afterwards able to compete with those countries with a greater chance of success.

It is not so much the want of education in this country as the application of it. It is better applied in Germany. In fact, the whole question, according to the Board of Trade Reports, turns upon method. In the Annual Report on Trade published in 1892—a year before the great light shone upon us from Birmingham—the following are given as Sir A. Bateman's conclusions from the data he had before him—

> "It is necessary, more than ever, that the change of conditions should be recognised, and we can scarcely expect to maintain our past undoubted pre-eminence, at any rate without strenuous effort, and careful and energetic improvement in method."

and he goes on to add—

> "The problem, how best this can be done, is of vital interest to all classes of the industrial and commercial community alike, though the assistance which the State can give in the matter must necessarily be of a limited character."

One would have thought that these reports would have been thoroughly considered by the Cabinet when the disruption took place; but, so far as I have been able to ascertain, they were never brought before the Cabinet and have never been considered up to the present time.

The Government themselves have admitted that there is necessity for inquiry, for after the disruption, and before they had settled on their policy, what did they do? They promised an inquiry—a grand inquest of the nation. What form did the result of that inquiry take? It took the form of an "Inquiry" Blue-book of 495 pages of statistics, which was dumped down on the Table of both Houses of Parliament without any conclusions drawn from those facts and figures being appended. Such conclusions were originally furnished, but they have been cut out, and the country has a right to know what they were. I am speaking to noble Lords who have been in the House of Commons, and I ask them whether they ever remember a Commission or Committee which did not, in their Report, give their conclusions as well as facts and statistics. I venture to say that we have not had a complete inquiry until we have a distinct conclusion from the facts that are adduced in this Blue-book. It is absurd to dump all these statistics and data upon the constituencies throughout the country; without independent expert help, it is indeed vain to hope that an unexpert community can possibly draw sound conclusions as to our home and foreign trade from the 495 pages of statistics as now submitted to them. I, therefore, ask His Majesty's Government to fulfil their undertaking, and to give us the inquiry for which I am asking, by appointing a small Commission. In America they appoint Commissions of one, but what I suggest is a small Commission instead of the wagon-load of 50 Commissioners—a cart would not hold them such as is now sitting to frame the tariff most beneficial to their own trades. In that case the wagon has, I think, been put before the horse, for the country has not decided as yet on having a tariff at all. The Cabinet then have acted without full and proper inquiry, and they owe it to the country and to themselves to show that their policy rests on a sounder basis than any that has yet been revealed. We have a right to expect that the Government should carry out their promise and give us a complete inquiry.

I believe that if the Government had appointed this Commission earlier they would not have found themselves in the awkward and unpleasant position in which they are now placed. Mr. Balfour was with me in Scotland in the early part of the year, and I urged him by letter after he had left, that after the Cabinet meeting, which was then about to be held, on the 23rd January, he should let it be announced that the whole question was to be sent to a small Committee of experts. If he had done that, how different would have been the position of the Government. I do not think it is even now too late. I believe that if they were still to act on that, and to issue such a Commission their position would be greatly improved. Nothing will get them out of the "bunker"—an expression not unfamiliar to the Prime Minister—into which they have got themselves except the niblick of a Royal Commission. I shall be surprised if my noble friend Viscount Goschen does not back me up in my request for a Commission. I see Lord Avebury in his place, and I think I may expect support from him, and also from my noble friend behind me, Lord Brassey, who has published an able book on this question, the heading of the last chapter of which is "A Royal Commission." The Chamber of Commerce of Glasgow passed a resolution in favour of the appointment of a small Commission. That has been followed up by the Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom, who also passed a resolution in favour of a Commission. Therefore, whatever backing I may or may not get in your Lordships' House, at any rate I am backed by the opinions of the Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom, who think it not only advisable but necessary that such a Commission should be appointed if you are to come to a wise decision on this question.

I have only a word or two to say on the colonial question. We are asked to tie the Colonies to us by what I hold to be a mercenary rope of straw. The Colonies have shown their patriotism in the late war, when they came forward to help the mother country from love of the mother country. It was an American admiral who once came to our help and said, when he did so without orders, that "blood was thicker than water." I, my Lords, believe that blood is thicker than tariffs, and that if you try to tie the Colonies to the mother country by mercenary tariffs it will lead to friction, disputes, and discontent, and will have the contrary effect to that which you desire. No, a better and loftier keynote was struck on this subject by Mr. Gladstone. I find in Mr. Morley's "Life of Gladstone," Vol. 1., page 363, that Mr. Gladstone, speaking of the Colonies, said—

> "Their natural disposition is to love and revere the name of England, and this reverence is by far the best security you can have for their continuing, not only to be subjects of the Crown, but to render it that allegiance which is the most precious of all—the allegiance which proceeds from the depths of the heart of man."

That I believe to be a sound view. The other I believe to be wholly unsound. But there is a bigger question than this behind. It is something much wider, larger, and more important, than even the tying together of England and her great Colonies—I refer to the union of the English-speaking race throughout the world. That, my Lords, is an object for which all should strive. It means nothing more nor less than the peace of the world, and I say it is a crime against humanity if everything is not done to bring about such a happy state of things as that. Do you think that the union of the English-speaking race will be promoted by firing hostile tariffs into America? No, that is not the way to bring about such a union.

I do not intend to raise the fiscal question more than I have done. I have brought this before your Lordships as a matter of business and I would ask noble Lords to consider what they would do in the management of their own estates. We all have estate offices. We have our head agent, and, if the estate is large enough, there are sub-agents. Believing that your estate had been for generations, perhaps, well managed, what would you say if suddenly a sub-agent in your office declared that "The whole thing is mismanaged, I will have nothing to do with it. Your estate is going to the dogs under its present management, and I wash my hands of it." What would your Lordships do in those circumstances? Would you accept for gospel all you had been told by the sub-agent? Far from it. You would institute a full and searching inquiry. And an inquiry by whom? By the best experts in the management of estates to be found in the country. We are all in our different ways trustees and guardians of the property of the nation, and our duty is to be careful in its management, and to transmit it, if we can, not impaired but improved to posterity. I then ask your Lordships to treat the main property of the nation, which is its trade and commerce, precisely in the same business-like way in which you would deal with your own estates. I know that there is a three-line whip against me on the Government side, and that the Opposition on this occasion are supporting the Government; and I think I know the reason for it. It is that my noble friend Lord Spencer and his colleagues feel that if my Motion was adopted it would get the Government out of the hole in which they wish to keep them. That is very natural. I move my Resolution, nevertheless, as being the right course for the Government and this House to take. My Lords, I thank your Lordships for the patience with which you have listened to me.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty praying him to appoint a small Commission to inquire into, and report upon, the present state and prospects of our trade, and whether any change of methods or other action is needed in furtherance thereof."—(*The Earl of Wemyss.*)

EARL COWPER: My Lords, I think everybody will feel, at first sight, that there is a great deal to be said, or that there might have been a great deal to be said, in favour of the course which the noble Earl has proposed. This is a very complicated question, depending upon a great many things which require very careful investigation, and just the sort of question which one would imagine ought in the first instance to be settled round a table by a few people of very deep and practical knowledge on the subject. To consider all that has been written during the last 100 years by the chief professors of political economy, with the assistance of the greatest thinkers of the day; to digest that vast mass of facts and figures with which we have been provided in sufficient quantity; to weigh carefully the respective interests of the consumer and the producer; to consider, with regard to retaliation, how far that powerful and formidable weapon can be used without firing, at the same time that we fire at the enemy, on our own men—all these matters ought to be settled in some way of this sort. The very worst way of settling a great and complicated question like this is on the public platform. It strikes me that by doing it in that way, which is rather the way we have adopted, we depend entirely upon very broad and general arguments addressed more or less to the passions of the crowd. If we look at the innumerable speeches which have been made on the subject we see that it is chiefly this sort of argument which is used—on the one side that of the cheap loaf in contradistinction to the dear one, which naturally appeals to the multitude, and on the other side promises of unlimited employment and of high wages, which is also very taking in the country. Then the duty put by foreign countries upon our goods is represented as a direct insult and injury to the nation, and the people are asked whether they intend to take it lying down.

I think that a Commission, if it had come some time ago, would have been a most admirable thing, but I am rather afraid that it is too late in the day to appoint one now. People's passions have been very greatly roused over the subject. One would have thought that a matter which depends entirely upon facts and figures and minute calculations would have had a contrary effect; but, indeed, there is no subject on which passions have been more excited than this. I think people's minds are already so much made up on this matter that even if you could get a Commission together, which perhaps you could, it is too late for it to have the effect that it would have had a year ago. Only those who already agree with it would be moved by any Report it might present, and those on the other side would remain of their old opinion. I think, too, it would be very difficult, in these days, when every man has a pronounced opinion, to get a Commission the members of which had not already declared their views, and this alone would prevent their being listened to so much as they would have been a year ago. I fear that for these reasons it is almost too late to decide the matter in the manner proposed. What we must look forward to is that the excitement which now prevails may gradually subside. I think it is already showing signs of doing so. I have great confidence in the ultimate good sense of the British people. I have no doubt that eventually, when the decision is arrived at, it will be most likely a sound one.

It has been said that we generally succeed in muddling through our wars and in emerging victorious in the end. I think, also, that in all great questions of reform and of policy we talk a great deal of nonsense in the first instance, and appeal too much to mere passion and sentiment; but I do believe that the English people generally muddle through to a right conclusion. But it takes time. They generally end, either by accepting the reform or rejecting it, or shelving it indefinitely, or sometimes by a sort of compromise, by admitting part and rejecting the remainder. I do not know that the great question which is before us now is one that admits of such a compromise. That is a matter for consideration, but what I do hope and trust is that the British public will have plenty of time given to them before they come to a conclusion. It is said by some that we cannot possibly go on as we are, that we should disorganise trade, and unsettle men's minds if we continue leaving this matter in abeyance. But it strikes me that trade would be much more disorganised if we came to a hasty and ill-advised conclusion, and had in a short time to reverse our decision. It seems to me clear that the Opposition are very anxious to hurry on the decision of this subject, and that His Majesty's Government desire to give time, and wish the decision not to be arrived at until the subject has been carefully considered. I am glad to hear from the cheers of noble Lords on the Front Ministerial Bench that I correctly state their opinion. I agree with them in wishing to postpone the verdict, though I am afraid I do not agree with all their followers in my personal hopes and expectations of what that verdict may be.

*VISCOUNT GOSCHEN: My Lords, I do not wish to deal with this matter as representing any group or Party; I wish to deal with it as a matter of business. I do not know whether others who are in favour of a Commission would wish to see a Commission appointed to make recommendations and advise a policy for the future. I have something different in view. What I think a great portion of the community would like, would be a clearer and more authoritative and exhaustive statement of facts. I feel confident that the nation has not yet got the full facts before them. A great part of the facts which they have got have been submitted by rival schools and rival combatants, and the public are bewildered and puzzled by the conflict of authorities. This feeling is shared by a very large part of the public. Apart from the Associations and Unions on each side there is a large body of practical commercial men who have not yet been able to see clearly in the matter, and who are asking, and energetically asking, for more information. Allusion has been made to the fact that the Associated Chambers of Commerce have voted by a majority in favour of a Commission. Is not that a very strong argument in favour of a proper inquiry? Are there any bodies of men in the kingdom whose interests are likely to be more closely affected by any decision which may be arrived at on fiscal policy than those represented in the Chambers of Commerce?

The resolution of the Chambers of Commerce strikes me as a great factor in the case. I believe it is admitted that a great portion of the City of London consider that there is a great deal to be elicited, and that they have not yet got before them all they have a right to know. At the beginning of the controversy a great many men decided that there must be a great deal to be said for the Birmingham policy, because they had an absolute belief in the strong personality and in the wisdom and discretion of Mr. Chamberlain. Many men who felt themselves unable to grapple with this complex problem said, "Mr. Chamberlain is the strongest man in the kingdom and is likely to be right." I know of my own personal knowledge many men who reasoned in this way. As the controversy has developed, however, that confidence—I will not say in the political world, but in the commercial world—has been somewhat shaken. They are not converted to the other side, but they see there is more to be said on the other side than they thought at first; and in their present state of doubt they are anxious to have more put before them. The difficulty is that so much heat has been developed that any new contribution of facts or figures is generally looked upon as an attack upon the side with whose position it does not entirely square. There is an intense desire to score on both sides.

The facts before the country, I submit, are not sufficient, because they are not accepted as authoritative; and what I should like to see, and what a great portion of the community, apart from political Parties, would like to see, would be an orderly, exhaustive, and impartial examination of all the facts. I am not so certain about the tariff reformers. They are instituting a further inquiry of their own, and I do not feel confident that they would be in favour of a Commission for obvious reasons. I say no more than that. But while the great political Parties on both sides may not be anxious for a Commission, a great portion of the trading, the manufacturing, and banking community is anxious for further knowledge. Have the Government, then, given us enough? The Blue-book is the only authoritative document we have, though the figures are not accepted by all the controversialists, and some other matters in it have been questioned. On the face of the Blue-book it is expressly stated that—

> "The present volume does not profess to cover he whole ground of the inquiry."

Therefore there remains other ground of inquiry which has not been covered, and the country has a right to ask that the whole ground should be covered. Are we to make this great fiscal change when, on the authority of a Government document, it is stated that the whole ground has not been covered?

Again, it would be an immense service if a summrry of the facts bearing on the present controversy could be extracted from the Board of Trade Returns enumerated in the appendix, and brought together. There are curious gaps in the Blue-book. It is difficult to understand why some subjects are in the Blue-book and others are omitted. There is no system in the arrangement of the materials; nor are the terms of Reference given. Who asked the questions which areanswered in the Blue-book? For instance, there is a Memorandum on the iron trade of the North-east of England. Why was the North-east selected- and why were other districts ignored? Again, the Blue-book states "it has been thought desirable to produce statistics about the tin-plate trade." Who thought it desirable? Why was that trade selected? Many similar questions might be asked about the contents of the Blue-book. It would really appear as if the Blue-book was merely a haphazard amalgam of a number of cases and a number of statistics which have been asked for by different Ministers. But do not take me as under-valuing the worth of the Blue-book. It is a storehouse of information. Many of the matters dealt with are admirably treated. It contains a mass of useful information. I do not think there is any part of the Blue-book I should like to see omitted; and if it is not altogether that which the country has a right to have, it is not the fault of the officials of the Board of Trade, who with immense industry compiled it.

Again, my Lords, there is another curious omission. At the Treasury there are gentlemen thoroughly acquainted with the history of taxation. For years they have been accustomed to weigh the incidence of taxation on the various classes of the community. Yet not one of those experts, so far as I know, has been officially invited by the Government to give evidence. Why was that? I think the country would like to know what these experts think of the question. I hope it is not because the gentlemen of the Treasury—who have given a life study to the question of taxation—have served mainly under free-traders, that it was decided their views should not be heard. Such an argument could not fairly be put forward by the Government. There are other matters not in the Blue-book upon which further information would be very desirable. I do not think we know nearly enough about our home trade. It has not been examined in the same way as our foreign trade. Yet the home trade is as important an element in our prosperity as the foreign trade. I do not know whether it has been observed how the prosperity of the home trade may be, as it were, temporarily in opposition to the prosperity of the export trade. We may have a most prosperous home trade, employing manufacturers to such an extent that they are obliged to decline orders from foreigners and our colonies because their workmen are already fully employed. Thus when there is really great prosperity, it might appear that our exports are declining. I say we scarcely know enough about the course of our home trade, side by side with the course of our export trade, and that is a matter which can be ascertained only by experts.

I should also wish for a clear, short, and authoritative statement as to our trade in the neutral markets, given in such a form that a conclusion may be arrived at on the assertion of tariff reformers that, while our trade with protectionist countries is declining, we are making no progress in the neutral markets. If it is the fact that where there are no tariffs and no protection—where there is a fair field and no favour for all—we are falling behind, the position ought to be exactly defined, because it is a most crucial matter. The protectionists may interject that it is due to "dumping." It is most important to examine the exports of the foreigner to neutral markets in such a case in order to see whether in these exports are included to any large extent the articles in which dumping takes place. In a word, what I want to know is why you should not aim at bringing out clearly the causes why we are not advancing—if we are not advancing — with our competitors in neutral markets. Is the falling off in our export trade due to tariff or to other causes? If it be due to other causes let us set to work to remove them rather than to attempt completely to alter our fiscal system in order to remedy a state of things which has not been brought about by the protectionist tariffs of other countries.

Next, there is the excess of imports over exports. There is a very able note on the subject in the Memorandum of the Board of Trade, but I think much remains to be said about it for the guidance of the country. I should also like more authoritative information upon the subject of foreign securities. I should like to know the extent of our holding in foreign securities, and I think there is a vast amount of capital invested abroad which must be added to the amount which is represented by so-called securities. I will give a curious instance of the way in which England derives profit, dividends if you choose, through its trade abroad, which does not enter into exports or imports. The English insurance companies have had to bear the loss of £2,000,000 in connection with the fire at Baltimore. For years the premiums for that insurance have been sent here to swell the receipts of the insurance companies. If in one acre of a city in America the business was so large, what must be the dimensions of our insurance business over the whole of the world? The profits on that business are remitted to this country, not in money, but in those imports which, if I wanted to use a controversial phrase, I should say are so disliked by the tariff reformers. Illustrations of this kind which might be multiplied *ad infinitum* ought to explode much of the anxiety which has been felt with reference to the excess of imports over exports.

Another point to be taken into account is the method of valuation adopted in this and other countries with regard to imports and exports. It is generally, but quite incorrectly, assumed that our exports ought to balance with our imports. Apart, however, from the point I have just raised, it must be borne in mind that if we take the case of any foreign country or colony and examine our exports to and imports from that country or colony in our own statistical and then in theirs, we shall find that there is an enormous discrepancy between the two. Why is this? Because in both cases the Returns add the freight and the charges, but while we add them to our imports, they add them to our exports. I have seen in an excellent book written by a free-trade senator in Australia the matter put this way, that during the years 1888 to 1901 British Customs returns showed imports from Australia amounting to £128,000,000 and exports to Australia amounting to £108,000,000, so that it would appear from those figures as if our imports from Australia were £20,000,000 higher than our exports to Australia. An examination of the Australian statistics, however, shows that the colonists estimate that £128,000,000 at £119,000,000, and the £108,000,000 which they take from us at £119,000,000, also, imports and exports thus balancing each other. There is accordingly a difference of £20,000,000 between the two calculations. It means £10,000,000 added on the exports outwards for freights and charges, and £10,000,000 for the freights and charges backwards. We do the whole of the carrying trade and the Australians do none of it. This illustration shows why our imports appear always so much greater than our exports. What I would wish is that a similar calculation should be made in regard to the great foreign countries with which we trade. The difference between exports and imports in the case of Germany, for instance, would be represented by a totally different sum if you were to take the German statistics. If we could get these matters brought clearly before the country I think a great advance might be made in the understanding of this subject.

I have pointed out these various matters, I hope the Government will see, in no controversial spirit. I have pointed out that we have an area which still, I think, demands wise exploration, which I cordially wish the Government would undertake. Like my noble friend I received a three-line whip stating that the Motion is to be opposed. I think it is a pity; I am very sorry for it. Personally I should be quite content as a free-trader to leave the matter where it stands, if I did not wish also to bring round to free trade those doubting masses who, I believe, would be gratified and relieved if they had further authoritative information. I can understand that the Opposition may not care to support the proposal; I can understand that the Government should not support it. As to the effect upon Governments and Parties, so far as I have been spoken to to-night, I care nothing. It is not from that point of view that I have looked at the question, but from the point of view of the commercial and manufacturing classes, the men who want their judgment to be informed, and who almost anathematise political Parties and that partisan warfare which only obscures their judgment, and who wish to see this matter treated as a matter of business, as becomes a common sense and commercial country. Neither the Opposition nor the Government need think that if they were to assent to such a Motion they would be showing any doubt in their own cause. They know all; the public does not know all. That is the important point. Is it a concession the Government would have to make? Concession to whom? Not to the Opposition, because they have not asked for it; not to any Party, because no Party has asked for it. Therefore it is a concession which might easily be made, and which, I think, would be received with great satisfaction by those who are, perhaps, more than any others, interested in the final issue. We all agree that the issues are vast, and there has never been proposed a change of any great policy on so small an amount of impartial and systematic information. We are all agreed upon the greatness of issues. I wish we could be agreed upon the methods. I have pleaded for the method proposed by my noble friend, but I leave the matter in the hands of the Government. I have done my best to place before your Lordships and the Government that class of information which, apart from polemical questions, might be given with advantage.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, it may be convenient, before the discussion proceeds further, that I should state to the House how the Motion on the Paper is regarded by His Majesty's Government. In the few words I shall address to your Lordships I shall certainly follow the example set to us by my noble friend who has just sat down, and endeavour to deal with the question from a strictly business point of view, avoiding all those more acutely controversial arguments which it is difficult to exclude from these debates, and even, if I may say so, endeavouring to regard the question without reference to those tactical considerations which the noble mover told us are likely to prevail with the noble Lords on the other side of the House. I am obliged to distinguish between the speech of the noble mover and the speech of my noble friend who spoke last. Both of them, it is true, have expressed themselves in favour of the appointment of a Commission, but the Commission which the noble mover desires is a very different kind of Commission from the Commission which would content my noble friend behind me. The speeches of the noble mover always delight this House. They are characterised by a vigour and energy which many of us would like to emulate, if we could. If there is one characteristic more than another which distinguishes them, it is the intrepidity with which the noble Earl always approaches his subject; he is never deterred by difficulties, and upon this occasion I think he has ridden at the fence with characteristic courage.

Let us see what he asks us to do. He asks us to support the appointment of a Commission, and he was careful to tell us more than once that it was to be a very small one. However small the Commission may be, the task which the noble Earl proposes to assign to it may, I think, without exaggeration, be described as a colossal task. What is the scope of the inquiry with which the noble Earl proposes to entrust the Commission? They are to inquire into and report upon the present state and prospects of our trade. Now the trade of the British Empire is a trade whose ramifications cover the whole face of the earth. I suppose nothing in the world is bought or sold in which our commerce has not a direct or an indirect interest. It is the state and condition of that trade which the Commission are to investigate; and they are to inquire, not only into its condition, but into its prospects. They will have to consider, for example, how that trade is affected not only by the fiscal policy of other countries at the present time, but how it may be affected by the developments which that fiscal policy may or, indeed, is likely to undergo in the not distant future. In addition to that, they would have to consider the effects upon our commerce of all the industrial, scientific, and political developments which are going on in different parts of the world.

But while that branch of the inquiry would in itself be of immense extent, what are we to say of the second branch of it? The Commissioners are to report whether any change of methods or other action would be in furtherance thereof. I presume the noble Earl means of the interests of trade. Now whose methods and whose action are to be changed? He may refer either to the methods and action of the Government, or to those of the traders themselves. I take leave to assume that the noble Earl means both, because obviously the inquiry would not be complete unless it included the methods and action of the traders themselves as well as of the Government. I ask your Lordships to consider where such an inquiry would carry us. It would carry us not only into the whole of the details of the fiscal question, into an examination of the merits of free trade and protection, and of all the intermediate stages between the two, but it would lead the Commission into an investigation of all the various forms of assistance which Governments can give to trade, not only in this country, but in foreign countries. I think the noble Earl, in quoting from a return, mentioned the Consular system and especially the collection of commercial intelligence. Those are matters which obviously could not be excluded from the inquiry.

Then, again, there is the most interesting subject of technical education and of scientific research in all their bearings upon industrial development. Besides that the Commission would have to deal with such questions as the laws which govern patents, the state of the law with regard to merchandise marks and trade marks, the question of the law with regard to merchant shipping, with regard to railway and shipping rates, and the practice of other countries in regard to shipping subsidies. Another branch of the inquiry which could not be excluded would be the question of the protection afforded to labour by such legislation as the Factory and Workshops Acts. Those are all matters which would come under consideration in connection with an inquiry into the methods of the Government. But then there arises the question of the methods of the traders themselves. The Commission would have to inquire into all the alleged deficiencies of our traders, and the allegations that they do not sufficiently study the wants and requirements of their customers, that their commercial travellers are not as enterprising as might be desired, that their arrangements as to weights and measures are not such as to facilitate transactions with foreign countries, that their technical and commercial education leaves something to be desired, or, again, that they are, as is sometimes said, too conservative in their methods and not quick enough to adopt modern labour-saving machinery and improvements. I mention all these details because it seems to me that none of them can be excluded from the purview of such an inquiry as the noble Earl has proposed; and surely, if they are to be included, does it not follow that the inquiry, instead of being, as the noble Earl supposed, a short and simple matter, would be one of interminable length and far from likely to lead us to an early conclusion?

I wonder how the noble Earl would constitute that Commission. Where would he find members with sufficient authority and at the same time not committed to one or the other way of regarding these problems? I wonder whether the noble Earl would tell me in strict confidence whether he has got his eye upon a chairman suitable to take charge of such an investigation. I cannot help thinking that if we had in the earlier stages of this controversy proposed an inquiry of the kind suggested by the noble Earl we should have been told, and I am not sure that we should not have been told with a good deal of force, that we desired to shunt this question for two or three years, during which time it would undergo dissection by a Royal Commission. I say, therefore, almost without hesitation, that an inquiry such as the noble Earl proposes does not seem to me to be a practicable proposal. I wish now to say one or two words with regard to the, as I understand, much more limited inquiry which finds favour with my noble friend behind me. I gather that his object is to obtain information simply with regard to matters of fact. He wants the public to be made aware of the basis of fact upon which His Majesty's Government have founded their proposal that we should alter our fiscal policy in regard to these matters.

VISCOUNT GOSCHEN: Not only the basis of fact on which the Government have founded their policy, but the whole basis of fact upon which the nation should be called upon to form an opinion upon that policy. It might be quite other than the basis of facts upon which the Government founded their policy.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I do not in the least quarrel with my noble friend's correction. Well, are there not two questions involved in his proposal? There is the question in the first place whether the policy which we have proclaimed is defensible in principle, and there is in the next place the question how that policy should be applied. With regard to the first of those two points we do not admit that inquiry by a Royal Commission is necessary to justify us in recommending to the country that limited policy which we have proposed to Parliament. We consider that no one, and particularly no one who proclaims himself to be a free-trader, can be in any doubt that the high tariffs which are imposed by many foreign countries are injurious to our trade. If it be true that the course of commerce should, from a free-trader's point of view, be allowed to run freely and without obstruction, then it seems to me that we require no additional proof in order to show that when a foreign country builds up a tariff wall against you, and excludes your products, your trade must suffer thereby. That seems to me, if I may say so, to be axiomatic, and in addition to the, *à priori* argument, the statistics which are in our possession and have been published are, I believe, sufficient to establish that that injury has been, in fact, done to our commerce by these tariffs. But if it is suggested that the inquiry should not be for this purpose, but for the purpose of deciding how, when, and against whom we are to enforce the Government policy, then I say that these are points which it must be for the Government of the day to decide, and which the Government of the day will decide on the merits when the time comes, and not in consequence of the recommendations of any Commission which may be appointed in the year of Grace 1904. If we or our successors resort to retaliation, we shall, no doubt, do so because, owing to the circumstances of the moment, it has become evident that in certain cases it is possible to retaliate with effect. The inquiry which my noble friend behind me proposes we should now undertake is an inquiry designed to supply the public with data—with what I may call, I suppose, information as to the symptoms of the disease, if it be that the disease exists. Now, is it not the case that, so far as data are concerned, your Lordships have already in your possession a very considerable body of useful and trustworthy information. There is, in the first place, the Board of Trade Blue-book; and may I be allowed to express the pleasure with which I heard my noble friend state his approval of the manner in which that Blue-book had been prepared by the officials of the Board of Trade, who certainly had thrown upon them a task of very great difficulty and importance, which they seem to me to have fulfilled in the most admirable manner. But my noble friend told us that, although he gave credit to the compilers of the Blue-book, it did not entirely satisfy his requirements. He said that there were a good many gaps in the story, and I daresay the noble Lord is perfectly right. As to that, allow me to say that, if the noble Lord or any other Member of this House desires further information upon any particular portion of the subject which is insufficiently dealt with in the Blue-book, we shall be glad to do our best to provide that information for him.

The noble Viscount referred for example to the absence of information with regard to our home trade. I quite agree with him as to the importance of that trade; but much as further information of that kind is to be desired, I am under the impression that there would be very considerable difficulty in obtaining it under a separate head; I will, however, make inquiries as to this. He also expressed a wish for more information as to our trade in neutral markets. There I am not without hopes that we may be able to supplement the information given in the Blue-book; but whether it is possible to collect information as to the extent of our foreign investments I am quite unable to say at present. I venture to think that we should be more likely to get at the truth in a form of which we shall be able to make use from information provided from these sources than by the appointment of a Royal Commission, even with the more restricted reference which would content the noble Viscount. I am not at all sanguine as to the utility of an elaborate investigation by Royal Commission. I am sure that the noble Viscount remembers the Royal Commission appointed in 1885 to inquire into the subject of the depression of trade. I believe that that Commission sat for nearly two years. It produced a Majority Report, a Minority Report, and an independent Report by one Commissioner who could find room in neither of those camps; and to both the Majority and the Minority Reports there were attached a string of riders all pointing to different shades and varieties of opinion. It was a litter of Reports. But in this matter, from the moment that you allow an inquiry to extend into the region of tendencies and of the significance of the facts, you plunge at once into a sea of controversy from which I do not believe that you will extract anything except a very protracted and inconclusive investigation. Such an inquiry we are not prepared to undertake; and therefore I have to suggest to your Lordships that we should not support the Motion of the noble Earl, and that even an inquiry in the modified form suggested by my noble friend the noble Viscount is not one which we could in the present circumstances usefully undertake.

*Earl SPENCER: My Lords, after the announcement made by the Leader of the House, it might be thought unnecessary for me to say anything; but there are one or two points to which I should like to refer in the same non-controversial spirit as that of the speakers who have preceded me. My noble friend says that we on this Bench are opposed to a Commission because it would get the Government out of a hole. This is generally a very legitimate attitude for an Opposition, but on this occasion I entirely deny it. I have always said that I should be ready to accede to the appointment of such a Commission only if I thought that the cause of free trade was in danger, because I am sure that out of such a Commission, properly constituted, free trade would come triumphant. I am not now in favour of a Commission of inquiry. First of all, I believe that there is ample information available. The noble Viscount opposite, in his admirable and able speech—I need hardly say I always listen to him when he speaks on this subject with the utmost attention, for he is an expert on the subject to whom I should almost entirely bow—referred to the omissions from the Blue-book. Is there any subject in the world which could be referred to a Commission and from the Report on which experts like the noble Viscount could not find omissions? I admit that the points he has mentioned are important; but as to the iron trade statistics, and their limitation to the north-eastern district, my interpretation of the Blue-book is this—that it had to be prepared within a certain time, and that typical cases were taken in the different industries. The Blue-book is full of most interesting and valuable information. No doubt an interpretation of the facts has not been given as fully as we might have expected, but in some cases that interpretation is given in the clearest way.

We should all have welcomed the views of the Treasury officials; and also that of Sir A. Bateman; but if those views were not given I suspect it was because they were very strongly in favour of one side, and that the free-trade side. I have no objection to the information which the noble Marquess promises to give on specific points; but I quite agree with him as to the colossal nature of the task which the Commission would have if they followed out the suggestion of my noble friend; and that, if the Report were limited as the noble Viscount suggests, it would still develop into a very long and laborious undertaking. The Chambers of Commerce have, no doubt, a great influence in the country; but many of them have not the experience which we politicians have of the work of Royal Commissions. Those bodies have a very effective dilatory action on legislation; and to my mind they are generally appointed for the sake of postponing the settlement of any question. It is of the utmost importance that we should not prolong the controversy on this question, which is so sharply dividing Parties and which must have a very serious effect on all commerce and industry. I desire that the question should be submitted to the constituencies. Would the information obtained by a Royal Commission be read and digested by the constituencies? In every part of the country the electors are guided by local leaders, who are in turn guided by others above them, until we reach the hierarchy of Parliament. Would the experts that in part form that hierarchy have their opinions on this subject altered one tittle by any further information which could be collected? We have ample information already, not only in the Blue-book, but in the Foreign Office Reports, to form a proper opinion on this subject; and, as the experts are not likely to change their opinions, I do not see the advantage of appointing a Commission.

The noble Marquess said that it would be a matter of the greatest difficulty to appoint a Royal Commission. Ministers often differ as to how such a Commission should be appointed. Certain persons think that a Commission should be appointed representing the most forward defenders of particular doctrines. I have always differed from that mode of appointing a Commission, because it should be composed of the most impartial men you can find. Among the Commissions that have reported in late years I will cite the important body which dealt with temperance. I believe that the representatives on the Commission were equally divided; and what was the result? We merely had two conflicting Reports. After this fiscal question has been discussed so long, and with so much heat, I maintain with the noble Marquess that it would be extremely difficult, if not almost impossible, to appoint a Commission. Last year I was visited by a clergyman from the country, a Conservative. He told me that he had been brought up as a free-trader, but now that the fiscal question had arisen, he asked "What am I to do?" I told him to look at the experts who were on his side, and to note that the Chancellors of the Exchequer belonging to the Unionist Party are all free-traders. Those are the experts to whom I refer. I believe that the people do not require the Report of a Royal Commission so much as to read the views which are put forward by each side in the controversy. If the people will only read some of the speeches of the noble Viscount which he has delivered in an uncontroversial spirit, or those of the noble Duke the late Leader of this House, I think they will find the case for free trade put most forcibly and in the best spirit. No doubt there are speeches on the other side which will be able to guide them in obtaining a view of the controversy; but, after all, we get the best information from the Parliamentary Papers and other documents which are presented to us. We want the question thoroughly threshed out in Parliament and in the country, but I am confident that the country will not desire to continue this controversy a very long time. It is ripe for decision now, and the sooner the electors are appealed to for their opinion the better it will be for every interest concerned.

*THE EARL OF WEMYSS: My Lords, I should like to say, in reply, that it is not my intention to press my Motion to a division. I am perfectly satisfied with its having been discussed, and I should like, while thanking my noble friend the Leader of the Government in this House for his kind expressions with regard to myself, to say that he has misunderstood what I really want. I want the Board of Trade Reports carried to their full conclusion. Sir Alfred Bateman's conclusion was, that it was our method and want of pushfulness which were at fault. My main point is this, that the Government themselves some months ago thought an inquiry was necessary; they instituted an inquiry, and when that inquiry came back with an expression of opinion on matters that had been inquired into, they cut it out and sent this document of 495 pages of statistics to the electors, who are to settle in their own minds whether we ought to have free trade, protection, or retaliation; they are to settle it not from any opinions given them, but from these facts and statistics. I contend that it is impossible for them to form any opinion without having the conclusions before them. I am asked what kind of Commission I would propose. I should have suggested a Commission of three, and I would have put a judge at the head of it—Mr. Justice Bigham, for instance. I would also have appointed Sir Alfred Bateman, late Head of the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade, and a gentleman of great weight like Mr. Schuster, representing the Chambers of Commerce. A Commission of that kind could collect these, draw sound conclusions therefrom, and give the public data upon which to form an opinion. I deny that the inquiry which has taken place, when no conclusions are submitted, is of any value. It is in the interest of knowledge on this subject that I brought this matter forward, and I think it is a great mistake on the part of the Government to have declined to appoint this Commission. I ask leave to withdraw my Motion.

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 14th March, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time) Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Corbridge Gas Bill; Kirkby-in-Ashfield Urban District Gas Bill; South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway (Extension of Time) Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill (by Order). As amended, considered to be read the third time.

Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).

The CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS informed the House that the Committee on Group E of Private Bills not being appointed to meet until To-morrow, the parties promoting the Corporation of London (Southwark and other Bridges) Bill, which was set down for consideration upon the first day of the meeting of the Committee, had appeared before him and proved that the evidence of Donald Waters, Superintendent in the L Division of the Metropolitan Police, was essential to their case, and that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House.

Ordered, That Donald Waters do attend the Committee on Group E of Private Bills to-morrow, at Twelve of the clock.

Sheppy Gas Bill; Sutton Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 1).

Mr. KIMBER reported from the Committee on Group No. 1 of Railway Bills; That the parties promoting the Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill had stated that the evidence of William Henry Stubbs, of 121, Orwell Street, Grimsby, Pilot, George Cook Burn, of 11, Suffolk Street, Newland, Hull, Pilot, and Thomas Waite Shores, Grimsby, Pilot, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that their attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said William Henry Stubbs, George Cook Burn, and Thomas Waite Shores do attend the said Committee to-morrow, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That William Henry Stubbs, George Cook Burn, and Thomas Waite Shores do attend the Committee on Group No. 1 of Railway Bills to-morrow, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 1).

Mr. KIMBER reported from the Committee on Group No. 1 of Railway Bills; That the parties opposing the Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill had stated that the evidence of Captain William Abbot, Commodore of Pilots, Hull, John Edmondson, Pilot, Hull, and Robert Bond, Pilot, Hull, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that their attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Captain W. Abbot, John Edmondson, and Robert Bond do attend the said Committee To-morrow, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That Captain W. Abbot, John Edmondson, and Robert Bond do attend the Committee on Group No. 1 of Railway Bills To-morrow, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities Bill. Order for Second Reading upon Friday, 25th March, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

Bishop's Stortford and District Gas Bill; Torquay Tramways Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Nottingham (two); Aberdare (two); Boothroyd; Ynysgan; Barton; Ryde (four); Scunthorpe; Wiltshire; Moriah Miskin; Monkwearmouth; Wrexham; Derby; Sale; Wroxall; Daubhill; Bolton (two); Kirkwall; Hindley; Islington; East Cornwall; Hammersmith; Wishaw; Lincoln; Woodstock Road; and Rendham; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE.

Petitions for extension to women; from Draycott; West Bristol; and Bristol; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.

Petitions against; from Brentwood; Lincoln; Redditch; Chelmsford; Chichester; and Rotherham; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Haggerston, in favour to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOUR ORDINANCE).

Petition from Claylands, for withdrawal; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SUPERANNUATION ACTS, 1859 AND 1876.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 10th March, 1904, declaring Nanking to be an unhealthy place within the meaning of the Superannuation Act, 1876 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 9th March, 1904, declaring that Alfred W. Harman, Hammerman, Royal Laboratory, War Office, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVAL WORKS ACTS, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1899, AND 1901.

Account presented, showing the amount of Money issued out of the Consolidated Fund; the amount and nature of the Securities created in respect thereof; the amount of the surplus of Income over Expenditure for the financial year ended 31st March, 1896, and the amount of Money expended in pursuance of the Acts during the year ended the 31st March, 1903; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 98.]

PUBLIC OFFICES (ACQUISITION OF SITE) ACT, 1895, SESSION 2; PUBLIC OFFICES (WESTMINSTER) SITE ACT, 1896; PUBLIC OFFICES (WHITEHALL) SITE ACT, 1897; AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS EXPENSES ACT, 1898.

Account presented, showing the moneys issued out of the Consolidated Fund, the moneys borrowed and the securities created in respect thereof, the disposal of moneys issued to the National Debt Commissioners for temporary investment, and the expenditure, under the provisions of the Acts, to the 31st March, 1903; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 99.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 3125 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TELEGRAPH (MONEY).

Committee to consider of authorising the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of sums for the purpose of the Telegraph Acts, 1863 to 1899 (King's Recommendation signified) to-morrow.—(*Lord Stanley.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Kilmuir Estate, Isle of Skye.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state what is the area, net rental, poor law valuation, and purchase price paid in the case of the Kilmuir Estate, Isle of Skye, recently purchased by the Congested Districts Board for Scotland; how much is untenanted; and how is this to be utilised.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) I can only inform the hon. Member that the purchase of the Kilmuir Estate by the Congested Districts Board cannot be completed until the consent of the sale has been given by the Court of Chancery, and he will therefore understand I am not in a position to give him the information he desires.

County Clerks as Political Agents.

MASTER OF ELIBANK (Edinburgh, Midlothian): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, having regard to the fact that town clerks are debarred from acting as political agents in their own town, he will take steps to place county-clerks in a similar position.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) There is no statutory disability on town clerks so acting. Whether they do or do not depends as in the case of the county clerks on the regulations of their employers, over which I have no control. The point raised by the hon. Member would be one for fair consideration in any Bill amending the County Councils Act, but I am not prepared to introduce a special Bill on the subject.

Crown Fishing Rights in Orkney.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Commissioner of Woods and Forests, if his attention has been called to an advertisement in which a proprietor in Orkney claims having the Crown rights of fishing, and that the sea trout fishing is strictly preserved; and, if so, will he state whether such advertisement is in accordance with the agreement for lease entered into by the Woods and Forests with the said proprietor by which the public right of fishing was safeguarded by regulations to be approved by the Secretary for Scotland.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The proprietor to whom the hon. Member is presumed to refer has a lease until Martinmas next of the Crown's right as regards salmon and sea trout fishing, with an option of purchase. No public right of fishing was recognised in the lease, but the option of purchase if exercised is to be subject to regulations as to fishing by the public to be approved by the Secretary for Scotland.

Income-Tax Collection—Assimilation of English and Scotch Systems.

SIR J. STIRLING-MAXWELL (Glasgow, College): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the differences still existing between the systems of income-tax collection in Scotland and England, he will undertake that the two systems shall be assimilated, both as regards the form of the notices and the dates of their issue.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The objections which have been raised relate to the dates of issue and the form of the second and third demand notices in Scotland. The dates of issue for those are now the same in both countries, and the differences in the form of the notices are only such as are necessitated by the differences in the legal procedure of Scotland and England.

Income-Tax Committee and the Grievances of Clerks to Surveyors of Taxes.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the proposed Select Committee of this House to inquire into matters connected with income-tax will include such terms of reference as will enable clerks to the surveyors of taxes to place their grievances before the proposed Select Committee as regards their duties, present position, pay, and prospects.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) No such question could possibly come within the scope of the proposed inquiry.

Chinese War Indemnity.

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state the annual value of the annuities payable to Britain in respect of the Chinese war indemnity; the total amount of private claims lodged by British subjects, the total amount of claims admitted; and further, on what basis of priority the several claims are being paid out of the annual instalments.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) China disputes the claim of the Powers for payment of the indemnity in gold. The instalments received on account of the British share, converted into sterling, amounted:—For the year 1902 to £301,488; For the year 1903 to £314,157. The private claims lodged with the British Claims Commissioner amounted to £1,606,277, but they have been reduced on examination to £736,906. Almost the whole of the private claimants agreed to accept certificates entitling them to a *pro rata* distribution as the instalments are received. The distributions so far made amount to 75 per cent. of the private claims, exclusive of a number of small claims and death claims which have been paid off in full.

Trout Fishing in Loch Ness.

MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if his attention has been directed to the fact that there has just been formed by the proprietors of the land surrounding Loch Ness an association to prevent the public from angling for trout in Loch Ness, except upon payment of an annual sum to the association; in view of the fact that this loch is part of the public waterway between the Moray Firth on the East, and Loch Lhinnie on the West of Scotland, and that the public have, from time immemorial, exercised the right of angling therein, does he propose to take any steps for the protection of the public right of angling.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) My attention has not been directed to the matter referred to by the hon. Member, but as the trout fishing in Loch Ness necessarily belongs to the riparian owners there is no action possible on my part.

Porterage of Telegrams.

MR. RIGG (Westmoreland, Appleby): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will consider the advisability of charging porterage, in the case of telegrams which are carried by post office messengers more than three miles, from the end of the three mile limit and not from the telegraph office.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I have recently considered this matter, but I regret that I am not in a position to recommend the sacrifice of revenue which must be entailed by the alteration suggested by the hon. Member.

Sick Leave in Belfast Post Office.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the medical officer at Belfast directs the men to resume duty on a particular day, but advises the Department that they will be able to resume duty at an earlier date; and that as a result officials are often reported for exceeding their sick leave; and, if so, will he give instructions that the medical officer gives his orders to resume duty in writing, the duplicate of his advice to be sent to the Department.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) A recent case has been brought to my notice in which a sorting clerk and telegraphist at Belfast did not attend for duty on the day named by the medical officer. The circumstances of this case do not correspond accurately to those described by the hon. Member, but I am not aware of any other recent cases of the same character. I do not consider that any change of practice is required.

Belfast Sorting Office.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware of the condition in which the sorting office in Belfast is kept, and of the fact that the corps of cleaners is composed of a number of women insufficiently paid; and, if so, will he explain why the recent regulations in regard to cleaning are not carried out in Belfast.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am informed that an adequate staff is employed on cleaning duties at the Belfast post office, including the sorting office, and that the work is done efficiently, and in accordance with the instructions issued last year. The women are paid at the local rate of wages for work of the same class, and applications for situations as cleaners are numerous on the rare occasions when vacancies occur.

Farmers' Co-operative Societies—Translation into Welsh of Board of Agriculture Leaflet.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthenshire. W.): To ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, having regard to the importance of the formation of farmers' co-operative societies, and with the view to promoting the movement amongst farmers in Wales, he will consider the question of having translated into Welsh the leaflet on the subject issued by the Board of Agriculture in December, 1903, and numbered 97.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) We quite agree with the suggestion made by the hon. Member that the leaflet to which he refers should be published in Welsh, and arrangements will be made for the purpose so soon as some later details for which we are asking as to the working of some of the societies mentioned in the leaflet have been obtained.

Naval Reserve Men and the Merchant Service.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the fact that, in the shipping office, Cardiff, on 2nd and 3rd March, a notice was displayed to the effect that a steamer wanted sixteen firemen and ten sailors, wages £3 10s., which was £1 below the current rate of the port she belonged to, and that only Naval Reserve men need apply; and, seeing that Naval Reserve men are informed that the fact of their being so enables them to command better pay, will he arrange that in future no such notice shall be allowed at shipping offices under his Department.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The notice to which the hon. Member refers was issued for the purpose of informing Royal Naval Reserve men that a crew would be signed on for a certain vessel at a certain time, and at a stated rate of wages, and that the master was willing to engage Reserve men. Neither the Board of Trade nor its officers have power to interfere with the rate of wages paid at any port nor, so far as I am aware, has any authority informed Royal Naval Reserve men that they can command better pay than others. I am informed that, as a matter of fact, £3 15s. a month was actually agreed upon in the case referred to in the Question, and that of the men engaged five belonged to the Reserve. The notices exhibited at the Mercantile Marine Offices announcing what ships are in need of crews are found to be useful to seamen seeking employment, and I am not prepared to direct that they should be discontinued.

Report of Torpedo Boat Destroyers Committee.

Mr. YERBURGH (Chester): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Committee upon Torpedo Boat Destroyers has reported; and, if so, whether he will lay their Report upon the Table.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) This Committee reported in July last. It is not proposed to publish their Report.

King's Scholarship Examinations.

Mr. HENRY HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if he will say what was the number of the candidates for the King's Scholarship examination who passed in the first or second class at the last two examinations; and what proportion of these candidates can be accommodated in the existing training colleges.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The following table gives the number of candidates for the King's Scholarship examination who passed in the first or second class at the last two examinations:—

	Christmas, 1902.			Christmas, 1903.		
	First Class.	Second Class.	Total.	First Class.	Second Class.	Total.
Men . . .	521	933	1,451	550	1,016	1,566
Women . . .	1,577	2,959	4,536	1,904	3,432	5,336
Total . .	2,098	3,892	5,987	2,454	4,448	6,902

It must be remembered that the numbers for 1903 include a considerable number of persons who passed in the first or second class in 1902, but who entered again in order to secure a higher place. There are also a certain number who are unable to pass the medical examination which is required before admission to a college. In October, 1903, 3,439 students were admitted to training colleges. 1,186 men were admitted, of whom 1,001 had passed the King's Scholarship, and 156 some equivalent examination. 2,253 women were admitted, of whom 1,872 had passed the King's Scholarship, and 293 some equivalent examination. The remainder in either case were admitted under Articles 115 (*b*) and (*c*). The Board have as yet no accurate information as to the number of places which will be available in October next, but they anticipate that there will not be less than 1,250 places for men and 2,550 for women, or not less than 3,800 in all.

Exports of Indian and Ceylon Teas into Russia.

Sir EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will state the quantity and value of Indian and Ceylon tea exported into Russia in 1901–2 and 1902–3.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The figures are as follows:—

1901–2.	Direct Exports to Russia.		Re-Exports from the United Kingdom.		Total.	
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
	lbs.	£	lbs.	£	lbs.	£
British India	1,624,580	35,833	842,374	30,138	2,466,954	65,971
Ceylon . .	9,597,459	211,144	1,686,312	61,164	11,283,771	272,308
	11,222,039	246,977	2,528,686	91,302	13,750,725	338,279

1902–3.	Direct Exports to Russia.		Re-Exports from the United Kingdom.		Total.	
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
	lbs.	£	lbs.	£	lbs.	£
British India	3,967,836	100,554	2,886,445	94,778	6,854,281	195,332
Ceylon . .	11,403,975	273,695	3,647,807	124,794	15,051,782	398,489
	15,371,811	374,249	6,534,252	219,572	21,906,063	593,821

The figures showing exports from India are for the years ending 31st March, 1902, and 31st March, 1903, respectively. The Ceylon and United Kingdom figures are for the calendar years 1901 and 1902 respectively, their Trade Returns being made up for the calendar year.

Madras Presidency College—Professorship of Biology.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that on the professorship of biology at the Madras Presidency College becoming vacant, Mr. K. R. Menon, Assistant Professor of Biology, was appointed to act in the place of Dr. Bourne, a specialist in zoology, and has filled the position for two years; and whether, seeing that the Madras Government now proposes to supersede Mr. Menon by a specialist in botany from England, he will take steps to secure that Mr. Menon's qualifications and claims to the appointment shall be considered.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) I will take care that Mr. Menon's claims to the post are fully considered, but I cannot promise that he will be appointed to it.

Salaries of Irish National School Teachers.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many assistant masters, assistant mistresses, principal masters, and principal mistresses, are receiving salaries in Irish national schools under following heads: from £50 to £100 per annum: £100 to £125 per annum; £125 to £150 per annum; £150 to £175 per annum; £175 to £200 per annum; £200 to £250 per annum; and the average salaries of these four classes of teachers.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Salaries (including Residual Grant) of assistant teachers, and principal teachers, masters, and mistresses in the Board's service, and the average salaries of these four classes.

1. Salaries:—

	Assistants.		Principals.	
	Masters.	Mistresses.	Masters.	Mistresses.
£50 to £100 . .	1,054	1,899	2,661	2,381
£100 to £125 . .	9	18	1,182	575
£125 to £150 . .	17	8	483	138
£150 to £175 . .	11	—	151	76
£175 to £200 . .	—	—	106	8
£200 to £250 . .	—	—	35	5
Totals	1,091	1,925	4,618	3,183

2. Average Salaries: — Assistant teachers: masters £70, mistresses £62; Principal teachers: masters £100, mistresses £85.

Royal Irish Constabulary—Publication in Constabulary Gazette of Evidence of an Inquiry.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary sent a letter to the Editor of the *Constabulary Gazette* asking him not to publish the evidence given at a recent Court of inquiry, held in county Mayo, where Constable Anderson was charged with offences against discipline; and will he say under what circumstances was the publication withheld.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The reply to the first inquiry is in the affirmative. The editor expressed his appreciation of the Inspector-General's suggestion, and declared his intention not to publish the remainder of the evidence.

Ireland—Return of Scheme of Cottages.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state when the Return in connection with the latest completed scheme of cottages, under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, moved for on the 9th February, 1904, will be laid upon the Table of the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Application has been made to the clerks of rural district councils for the information indicated in the Return, which is not readily ascertainable. Some weeks must elapse, I am afraid, before it can be completed.

Payment of Temporary Medical Officers in Ireland.

MR. JORDAN (Fermanagh, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the action of the Local Government Board in refusing to sanction payment of half-fees of medical practitioners acting as *locum tenens* in the Hollywell Dispensary District of the Enniskillen Union, county Fermanagh, during the enforced absence of Dr. Tate, the medical officer of the district, because of a serious accident; will he say what are the grounds on which said refusal was based; and whether, in view of the amount of the sum and the poverty of the division, he will instruct the Local Government Board to sanction the payment of the amount in question.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) There is no statutory provision enabling the Board to allow recoupment to the local authority in respect of this service, and the Board is unable, therefore, to sanction the payment.

Future of the Volunteer Force—Report of Royal Commission.

Mr. MOON (St. Pancras, N.) To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the existing state of uncertainty as regards the future of the Volunteer Force, and the inconvenience occasioned thereby to all ranks of the force, he can indicate approximately any date on which the Report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the organisation and conditions of service of the Volunteers is likely to be issued.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The taking of evidence is finished and the Report is being considered. I have as yet received no intimation as to when the Commission are likely to present their Report. I trust, however, that it will be soon.

Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers—Cost per Head.

Mr. YERBURGH: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state the cost per head of the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers in the years 1893–94 and 1903–4.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The cost per head of the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers (including in each case the permanent staff) in the years 1893–4 and 1903–4 is estimated to be:—

	Militia.	Yeomanry.	Volunteers.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1893-4.	16 18 0	10 9 0	5 0 0
1903-4.	18 4 0	26 13 0	6 6 0

These figures are arrived at by dividing the total estimated charges for the several forces by their effective numbers, according to the latest returns prior to the Estimates. The cost per head of the Militia for 1903–4 is somewhat below normal, as provision was not made for training the whole of the force that year. The Yeomanry Vote for 1903–4 is somewhat high, as the Estimate provided for an establishment considerably in excess of the effectives at the beginning of the year. If the number, 29,000, for which the Estimate provided were taken as the divisor, the cost would be £21 2s. 8d. per head.

Transvaal Chinese Labour Ordinance—Regulations.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the regulations under the Transvaal Chinese Labour Ordinance have now been settled and approved, and when the House will be in possession of the regulations.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The regulations have not been finally settled. I cannot fix a date when they will be laid before the House.

Recommendation of Miners Phthisis Commission in the Transvaal.

Mr. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire) To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any steps have been taken to carry out the recommendations of the Miners Phthisis Commission appointed for the Transvaal in 1902.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) Lord Milner informs me that a great deal has been and is being done to improve the sanitary condition of the mines generally, and to minimise specific danger in the dusty parts of the mines. The question if any, and, if so, what preventive measures could be legislatively enforced is still under consideration. Medical opinion is not agreed as to specific preventives, such as respirators, of which no completely satisfactory type has yet been discovered. The Chamber of Mines has offered a prize for invention of best means of preventing dust in mines, and it is hoped that competition may throw further light on the subject. The medical officer of health reports that numbers of deaths from miners' phthisis among the whole population of Witwatersrand, both white and coloured, was eight last month.

Regulations for Landing of British Subjects at Beira.

MR. CATHCART WASON: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if British subjects are prohibited landing at Beira on the way to British Central Africa or Rhodesia unless possessed of a certain amount of capital; and, if so, if there is any intention to apply a similar Ordinance for the Transvaal.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The regulations dated 17th November 1902, as to passengers disembarking at Beira, is as follows:—Article 1. Passengers desiring to disembark at Beira will receive permission to do so on complying with one or other of the following conditions. (*a*) A declaration in writing that their destination is Rhodesia, and, if it be judged desirable, a deposit with the police authorities of a sum of £10, for which a receipt will be given. (*b*) Proof that the applicant possesses money or its equivalent to the value of £50, and delivery to the police authorities of a sum of £20, as a deposit, for which a receipt will be given. Individuals from whom this receipt will be required will undertake to withdraw from Beira by the first means after the period of eight days shall have elapsed if they cannot show that they have obtained employment or other means of subsistence. (*c*) Proof to the police authorities that they have immediate employment or other means of subsistence. The deposits to which this article refers will be placed in the hands of the police official on board, who will transfer them to the proper authority. Article 2. The Commissioner of Police may employ the deposits to which Sections (*a*) and (*b*) of Article 1 refer in providing subsistence for depositors should they find themselves without means of support and also passage by rail to Rhodesia, or by sea to another port. The deposits to which Sections (*a*) and (*b*) of Article 1 refer, or balances thereout of, after the expenses mentioned in the article shall have been paid, will be delivered to the depositor in Beira, or sent to his order at such place as the Commissioner of Police shall determine. Article 3. The Commissioner of Police may effect the expulsion of all persons who may land without observing the regulations laid down in Article 1, should they not immediately submit to them. The Natal and Cape Immigration Restriction Acts prohibit the immigration of any person a pauper or not in possession of visible means of support or likely to become a public charge. A similar Ordinance has been suggested for the Transvaal.

Indentured East Indian Immigrants in the Colonies.

MR. GRENFELL (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give approximately the number of indentured East Indian immigrants in the Colonies, and where such labourer is chiefly employed,

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The numbers according to the latest information available are—Natal, 25,636, British Guiana, 14,609; Mauritius, 10,083; Fiji, 8,225; Trinidad, 7,678; Jamaica, 1,168. They are employed chiefly on sugar plantations, but also on cocoa plantations (in Trinidad), on fruit farms (Jamaica), and in coal mines (in Natal).

Government Sanction of Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government have now sanctioned the Ordinance respecting the introduction of indentured Chinese labour into the Transvaal.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The Ordinance has been sanctioned.

Care of Imbeciles—Suggested Royal Commission.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, in view of the petition presented to His Majesty's Government by various persons and authorities interested in the case of imbeciles and defective or feeble-minded persons that a Royal Commission should be appointed to consider the provisions now made for these classes, whether he is now in a position to reply to the further letter presented to him in July, 1903, in support of the petition by Members of Parliament on both sides of the House.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I understand that this question has for some time past been engaging the attention of both the Home Office and the Local Government Board. These Departments have not yet decided upon the best form of inquiry to meet the particular problems referred to, and it may be necessary to extend the scope of the reference. A decision will be reached, I hope, at an early date, which will be communicated to the hon. Member if he will put down another Question in a week's time.

Re-introduction of Bills of Exchange Amendment Bill.

SIR F. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if it is the intention of the Government to reintroduce the Bills of Exchange Amendment Bill of last year.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) The answer is in the affirmative.

Report of Committee on Parliamentary Grant for Meteorology.

MR. FREDERICK WILSON (Norfolk, Mid): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the Committee appointed in 1902 to inquire into the administration of the Parliamentary Grant for Meteorology may be expected to report.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) It is hoped that the Committee will report very shortly.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

War Office Employees and the Ventilation of Grievances.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the advisability of granting to the various sections of organised Government workers employed under the War Department the same facilities of approach to the Secretary of State for War as were granted to the postal employees by the Duke of Norfolk when Postmaster-General.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): Government employees have full freedom of access to their superiors, and are able to bring to their notice any points they desire to have considered. I can give no general undertaking to receive deputations, but if any special circumstances make me consider it desirable, I shall be prepared to consider such applications for a deputation received through the regular channels.

Duke of York's School.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that at the Duke of York's School 560 boys from nine to sixteen years of age are taught by one head and five assistant masters, who have also to train forty Army schoolmasters in the training college, and that in spare time one of the masters has to keep the magic lanterns of the Army in order, he will consider the advisability of increasing the teaching staff.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The question of the physical, moral, and intellectual training of the Duke of York's School is now being considered by a Committee, and their attention has been directed to the question of the strength of the teaching staff.

Director of Army Contracts.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the state ment of the War Office Reconstitution Committee, that a Director and an Assistant Director of Contracts have been appointed, neither of whom had previously any experience in buying, or any knowledge of the special stores to be bought, is a correct statement of fact; if so, who is responsible for such appointments; and will these appointments be continued.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The statement referred to in the Question appears to me to be a somewhat incorrect representation of the facts. The officials referred to have not previously served in the contract branch, but the present

Director of Contracts had several years experience in charge of the Army Clothing Department, Pimlico. No official could be selected who could have a complete knowledge of all the various stores dealt with by the contract branch. I am responsible for the promotion of these gentlemen.

MR. LAMBERT: The statement in the Question is a quotation from a War Office document.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Lords of the Treasury have sanctioned the appointment of Mr. Henry de la Bere as Director of Army Contracts; whether the announcement of that gentleman's appointment was made by the Secretary of State for War with the concurrence of their Lordships; and, whether Mr. Alfred Major had resigned the office of Director of Contracts when the appointment of Mr. de la Bere was officially announced.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The Lords of the Treasury sanctioned the appointment of Mr. Henry de la Bere as Director of Army Contracts on the retirement of Mr. Major, which took place on the 11th March. Mr. de la Bere has officiated as Director of Contracts, without additional pay, since Mr. Major proceeded on sick leave pending retirement.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last paragraph of the Question.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Mr. de la Bere was not appointed; he was asked to undertake the duties pending the resignation.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Was not his appointment announced officially in *The Times* before the resignation took place.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is now quoting from a newspaper.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: The right hon. Gentleman supplied it to *The Times*.

Admiralty Grants to Scottish Episcopal Churches.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state how much of the £12,278, granted by the Admiralty in aid of the Church of England and the Scottish Episcopal Church during the last five years, has been granted to these Churches respectively; how many Scottish Episcopal churches have received grants; and where these churches are situated.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk Woodbridge): The sum of £12,278 18s. 9d. referred to is made up as follows:—Church of England, £6,588 2s. 11d.; Church of Ireland, £5,472 1s. 5d.; Scotch Episcopal Church, £218 14s. 5d.; Total, £12,278 18s. 9d. Grants have been made to twenty-two Scotch Episcopal churches, including the following:—Banff, Fraserburgh, Greenock, Kirkwall, Lerwick, Peterhead, St. Andrews, Wick.

Rosyth.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Department are being called upon to make any payments for access to land at Rosyth, in addition to the £135,000 already paid; and, if so, will he say what these claims amount to.

MR. PRETYMAN: The Admiralty have not been called upon to make any such payments for access. In order to make a railway connection with the North British Railway Company's line it has been necessary to acquire an area of glebe land from the Minister of Inverkeithing. This had to be purchased on a valuation of the Court of Teinds which fixed the price at £4,800. The area is about 6¼ acres.

Admiralty Grants to Nonconformist Bodies.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state how much of the £11,316 3s., granted by the Admiralty to Nonconformist bodies during the last five years, was received by the Baptist, Congregational, Presbyterian, and Wesleyan communities respectively.

Mr. PRETYMAN: The sum in question was made up as follows:—Wesleyans, £7,170 9s. 4d.; Presbyterians, £3,751 11s. 2d.; Baptists and Congregationalists, £394 2s. 6d. The grants to the two latter bodies cannot be differentiated, as they act in unison and have appointed a joint committee to confer with the Admiralty in respect of these grants.

Coaling War Ships at Sea.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he has any official reports upon the experiments which have been with the apparatus for coaling His Majesty's ships when at sea; and, if so, will he state their purport, and can he state if this system of coaling has been adopted by any other Powers.

Mr. PRETYMAN: Official reports have been received which show that further experiments are desirable, and these are now in progress. Apparatus for this system of coaling is under trial by several foreign Governments.

Australian Labour Laws.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that, by a recent Act of the Australian Legislature, British workers landing in Australia under contracts of labour are treated as criminals and subjected to imprisonment and deportation; and whether, having regard to the burden imposed upon British taxpayers by the cost of Imperial defence, he will bring in a Bill to secure to all classes in this country the right of entry into all parts of His Majesty's dominions.

*The **SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES** (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington): The answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative, but as has already been pointed out in answer to the hon. Member's Question of the 11th of February,† though the Act has been in force for more than two years, not a single case of any British workman being treated as described has occurred. In regard to the second part of the Question, the hon. Member does not appear to be aware that Australia provides entirely for its own military defence and further contributes, with New Zealand, half the estimated cost of the Naval Squadron in Australasian waters. His Majesty's Government have no intention of proposing such legislation.

Chinese Labourers and Rights of Property in the Transvaal.

Mr. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, if a Chinese labourer acquires under a contract entered into with a British subject for good and valuable consideration any house, land, building, or other property in breach of the provisions of the 14th Section of the Transvaal Ordinance, the contract will be void in law, and, if so, to whom will the property belong; or whether, subject to the parties to the contract undergoing such punishment as may be inflicted under the Ordinance, the labourer will be entitled to retain his property.

***Mr. LYTTELTON**: The contract is one prohibited by law and is void. The property does not pass under it and remains in the hands of those who purported to dispose of it.

Mr. SOARES: Would the answer of the right hon. Gentleman be the same if the conveyance were taken in the name of a child born in South Africa of Chinese parents?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Oh, that is a Chinese puzzle.

Native Labour in the Transvaal Mines.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will give the latest information received from the Transvaal Chamber of Mines, Johannesburg, in reference to the number of natives distributed to the mines during February by the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association; whether he will state what was the increase in the native supply of labour during February last, and what was the total number of natives employed in the mines at the end of the month referred to; and whether these facts are receiving the consideration of the Government in connection with their final decision as to the Transvaal Chinese Labour Ordinance.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix., 1025.

*MR. LYTTELTON: A loss of seventy-four in January was converted into a gain of 1,199 in February. The natives distributed in February were 6,263 of whom 223 were allotted to the railways. The total number employed was 69,966. The returns continue to engage my attention, but these fluctuations do not appear to me to affect the situation appreciably.

Jameson Raid.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the statement in the despatch of the late Colonial Secretary to Lord Rosmead, dated 10th April, 1897, that the British South Africa Company would have to make compensation for the Jameson Raid, still holds good; and, if not, what explanation is there (if any) for this change of policy.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I can only repeat the answer given by my predecessor on 1st April, 1901,† that His Majesty's Government have been advised that there is no legal liability on the part of the British South Africa Company to pay to His Majesty's Government, as representing the Government of the late South African Republic, any compensation in respect of the Raid, and that the right to exact reparation for any damage has not passed to His Majesty's Government.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Who gave that advice? Was it Whitaker Wright?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Canada and the Metric System.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, if he has now received the reply of Canada as to the adoption of the metric system; and whether he will when received, lay it upon the Table of the House.

MR. LYTTELTON: The reply to the first part of the Question is in the negative. The despatch, when received, will be printed and laid immediately.

Australia and Preferential Tariffs.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any assurance has been received from the Governments of the Australian Commonwealth and New Zealand that under certain circumstances their tariff against imported British manufactured goods will be removed.

*MR. LYTTELTON: There has been no correspondence with the Governments of Australia and New Zealand on this subject since the Conference of 1902, and no such assurance has been received.

Post Office and the Cash-on-Delivery System.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received representations from local authorities and others that the introduction of a cash-on-delivery post by the postal authorities would inflict injury on traders and shopkeepers in country towns and villages; and, if so, whether he can now give an assurance that it is not intended to proceed further with the scheme.

*THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I have nothing to add at present to the reply which I gave on 22nd February to a Question asked on this subject by the hon. Member for North Tyrone.†

Post Office Telephones.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): On behalf of the hon. Member for South Armagh, I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he intends to continue the installation of the central battery system in connection with Post Office telephones; and whether he is aware that this system has not found favour in other countries on account of the number of relays required and other causes of expense.

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† See (4) *Debates*, xcii., 329.

† See (4) *Debates*, cxxx., 564.

LORD STANLEY: It is intended to continue the use of the central battery system for Post Office Telephone Exchanges in London. It has given excellent results, being both efficient and economical. I am not aware that this system has not found favour in other countries. On the contrary, I am informed that it is generally adopted for large Exchanges in America, and it is either already in use, or about to be introduced, at important Exchanges in several European States.

Sugar Convention and Artificially Sweetened Milk.

SIR CHARLES McLAREN (Leicestershire, Bosworth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if preserved milk artificially sweetened is within the scope of the Sugar Convention; whether Switzerland or any other Continental country now grants a bounty on exported sugar; and whether preserved milk coming from any such country will be now excluded from our imports.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): Preserved milk if it contains "in a notable proportion artificially incorporated sugar" is among the articles assimilated to sugar for the purpose of Article 1 of the Sugar Convention. Russia and Denmark are the only Continental countries which have so far been found by the Permanent Commission to grant export bounties on sugar. No preserved milk appears to be imported into the United Kingdom from either of these countries.

Sugar Convention—Effect on Sugar Prices.

SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he will state what was the price of sugar before the ratification of the Sugar Convention, and what it is at the present time.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The average prices at which raw and refined sugar respectively were imported into the United Kingdom in May, 1902, and February, 1904, computed from the declared quantities and values of the imports, were as follows: The price per cwt. of raw sugar in May, 1902, was 8s. 2½d. and of refined sugar, 10s. 10¼d. The corresponding prices in February, 1904, were 8s. 9¾d. and 11s. 0¾d.

Public Vaccination.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state how the amount of fees paid to public vaccinators by the various boards of guardians since the passing of the Act of 1898 compares with the cost of vaccinations prior to the passing of that Act.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): According to the information I have obtained, the total number of vaccinations and revaccinations performed by public vaccinators in the four years ended at Lady Day, 1899, was 1,370,897, and the average amount of the fee per case was 2s. 2d. In the four years ended at Lady Day, 1903, the total numbers of vaccinations and revaccinations performed by public vaccinators had risen to 3,197,192, and the average amount of fee per case was rather less than 5s. 10d. The substitution of the system of domiciliary vaccination under the Vaccination Act, 1898, for vaccination at fixed stations and the requirement that the operation shall be performed with antiseptic dressings have greatly increased the demand upon the time of the public vaccinators, and higher fees have consequently to be paid. A Departmental Committee is, however, at present inquiring into the subject of vaccination fees.

Disease caused by Milk at Finchley.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the report of the Medical Officer of Health for Finchley on a recent outbreak of disease due to milk, similar to that which occurred in Woking last autumn; and whether he intends to introduce legislation this session with a view to preventing such occurrences in the future.

MR. WALTER LONG: I have seen the report referred to in the Question. I have taken note of the suggestion for legislation, but I cannot promise to make prosposals on the subject during the present session.

Frozen Meat and Cancer.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has any official information showing that the stoppage of decomposition in frozen and chilled meat during transit from abroad to the United Kingdom, has any injurious effect upon those eating such food, and especially whether it contributes to the increasing number of cases of cancer; and, if not, will he direct inquiry to be made into the matter.

MR. WALTER LONG: I have no information to the effect suggested by the hon. Member. Whether the eating of frozen meat has any influence in producing cases of cancer is a question to which the attention of the Cancer Research Committee, now sitting, might, I think, properly be drawn. I have had the matter under my attention, and will consider what steps should be taken with regard to it.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES: Am I to give notice to the Cancer Research Committee?

MR. WALTER LONG: No, I will do that.

Local Taxation Account.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will grant the Return relating to the Local Taxation Account which appears on the Notice Paper to-day.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): I shall be ready to give the Return, subject to some small modifications upon which I will communicate with the hon. Member.

The Return referred to is as follows:—

Local Taxation Account—Return, in the following form:—

Country.	Number of gallons at proof strength of tested spirits cleared for Home consumption year ended 30th day of September, 1903.	Number of liquid gallons of untested spirits cleared for Home consumption year ended 30th day of September, 1903.	Net amount already paid over, or to be paid over, to local authorities on account of Spirit Duties year ended 30th day of September, 1903.	Number of barrels of beer brewed year ended 30th day of September, 1903.	Number of barrels exported, destroyed, &c., on which the Duty has been remitted.	Net number of barrels liable for Local Taxation Account.	Net amount paid over, or to be paid over, to local authorities on account of Beer Duty year ended 30th day of September, 1903.	Total amount paid over, or to be paid over, to local authorities on account of Duty on spirits and beer year ended 30th day of September, 1903.
			£ s. d.				£ s. d.	£ s. d.
England								
Ireland								
Scotland								

Coal Commission.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Second Report of the Coal Commission will be available to the public; will the accompanying evidence include the evidence taken up to the present time; and will the Report contain any expression of opinion by the Commissioners as to the effect of the imposition of the coal duty on the trade.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I hope that the Second Report of the Coal Commission will be printed this week. It will be a merely formal Report submitting evidence, on the lines of the first Report. It will contain evidence given before the Commission up to the 21st of October last. The Report will not deal with the coal tax, as no evidence on the tax had been taken before October last.

Customs Watchers.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he has received through the Board of Customs a memorial from the Customs watchers; and, if so, when a reply may be expected.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: A memorial has been received and is under consideration.

Electric Lamp Brackets in the Mall.

MAJOR EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works whether the electric lamp brackets which have been erected along the Mall and in front of Buckingham Palace are intended to be permanent; by whom they have been put up; and who is responsible for their design.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): The answer to the first paragraph is in the negative. The lamp brackets have been put up temporarily by the Office of Works. The Office of Works is not aware of the name of the designer. The brackets are trade articles kept in stock.

MAJOR EVANS GORDON: Arising out of the answer of the noble Lord can he arrange meanwhile to have the brackets painted a less hideous and aggressive colour?

LORD BALCARRES: The paint is also temporary and probably more so than the brackets.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Will the removal of the brackets involve the pulling up of the road again?

[No answer was returned.]

Girls' Public Day School Company, Limited.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he is aware that, from the report of the Girls' Public Day School Company, Limited, a sum of £2,826 was paid to that company last year by the Board of Education towards the £5,131 paid by that company to its shareholders as a dividend; whether he is aware that the fees paid by each pupil in these schools exceeded £15 a year; and whether such grants from taxation in aid of private enterprise are to be continued; and, if so, whether these grants are to be extended to all other private venture schools providing education to the middle and richer classes of the community.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): As I announced in the House last year the clause in the Directory, under which the institution referred to and other similar institutions are eligible for grants, will be withdrawn after 31st July next. If the company should propose such an alteration in their arrangements as would bring them into conformity with the regulations of the Board as thus modified, the Board will be prepared to consider whether any temporary continuance of existing grants would be justifiable in order to allow time for the completion of these alterations.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY: Will similar arrangements be made with other companies having private venture schools?

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: The same clause covers them all.

London County Council Education Committee.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether the draft scheme for the constitution of an education committee submitted by the London County Council has yet been sanctioned by the Board of Education; and, if not, whether any objection to the scheme has been forwarded to the London County

Council; and, if so, whether he will state the nature of such objection.

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: The Board will communicate their decision to the London County Council in time for the meeting of the Council to-morrow. Under these circumstances it would not be proper that I should inform the hon. Member of the decision of the Board.

Education Act—Provision of New Denominational Schools.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he will state the number of cases now pending in which the approval of the Board is sought for the erection or enlargement of a denominational school in lieu of a provided school under the Education Act, 1902; whether he will state in how many of such cases the applications are from the Roman Catholic and Church of England denominations respectively; and how many local inquiries have been held, or are pending, relative to such cases.

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: I am not aware of any cases at all in which a denominational school has been erected, or enlarged, in lieu of an existing provided or council school. The only cases of substitution are of council or provided schools for denominational schools. Fifty-four such substitutions have been completed, and seventy-six others are in process of completion. The Question in the second paragraph does not arise. In answer to the third paragraph there have been three public inquiries as to the provision of new denominational schools, two of which have been refused; the report of the third has not yet been received, Two other inquiries are pending.

Denbighshire and the Education Act.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether any decision has been arrived at in regard to the representations and objections addressed to the Board by the Parish Council and inhabitants interested in the Glyn Traian Pontfadog National School, Denbighshire, relative to the draft Final Order in the case of such school; and whether the Board will order a local inquiry to be held before finally settling any scheme for the appointment of foundation managers for such school.

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: The application on which the draft Final Order was prepared only mentioned one trust deed, and the Board had no knowledge of any other. It has now been ascertained that there are two trust deeds for the school—one of a very strict Church of England character, the other of a more liberal character. The observations which persons in the locality have submitted to the Board are now under consideration, and the Board will direct a local inquiry if they are satisfied that it is necessary or desirable.

Education in Denbighshire—The "Appointed Day."

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he will state the grounds upon which the Board of Education has issued a notification to the Clerk of the Denbighshire County Council further postponing the appointed day, under the Education Act, 1902, from 1st April to 1st June, in Denbighshire.

Sir WILLIAM ANSON: The Board have received official information that the Denbighshire County Council have passed a resolution "not to apply any rate for the support of voluntary schools within the county unless such schools are handed over unconditionally to the education authority for the area within the jurisdiction of the Denbighshire County Council." The Board have postponed the appointed day on account of this declared intention of the county council not to carry out the Act in its integrity.

Educational Applications by Local Authorities.

Dr. MACNAMARA: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Morley Division of Yorkshire, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education how many applications have been made by the new education authorities for permission to build new schools or enlarge old ones; how many have been granted; and how many similar applications have been made and granted for non - provided schools.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: So far as the information at the disposal of the Board shows, notices have been published for the provision of 114 new council schools and the enlargement of nineteen others; for the provision of twenty-two new Church schools and the enlargement of ten others; for the provision of sixteen Roman Catholic schools and the enlargement of three others; and for the provision of five other schools (denomination uncertain). Of these 157 cases, six council schools have been put on the Annual Grant List, two Church schools, and no Roman Catholic Schools. Many of the other cases are still in course of publication, some are still under consideration, and three (one Church and two Roman Catholic schools) have been refused. No case of enlargement has yet been passed.

South Uist Crofters.

MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if the promised inquiry into the condition of the crofters and cottars in South Uist has taken place; and, if so, when the Report may be expected to be issued.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The promised inquiry has taken place. The Report is in course of preparation, and is being pushed forward as rapidly as possible, but the date when it will be ready for issue cannot as yet be stated.

Education Grants.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer from what dates, respectively, did the additional grant for education in England and Wales, consequent on the Education Act of 1902, and the Irish Development Fund Grant, begin to accrue, and what was the amount paid on account of each grant in the financial year 1903–4.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The date from which the aid grant under the Education Act, 1902, begins to accrue varies in different localities. The amount to be paid in respect of the grant in the present financial year cannot yet be stated. The Ireland Development Grant Act provided that two-thirds of the full annual grant should be paid in the current year.

MR. CLANCY: The hon. Gentleman has not answered the Question at all. What was paid on account of the grant? What was done with the money said to have been paid on account?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I have said it was provided that two-thirds should be paid in the current year. I can add nothing to that.

MR. CLANCY: It is not an answer to the Question. I will put it to the hon. Member's superior officer when he comes.

Later on Mr. CLANCY asked for an answer from Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, but, it being Three o'clock, the Speaker directed that it was too late, and suggested that the Question might be put down again.

Castlerea District Council and the Labourers Act.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the scheme under the Labourers Acts promoted by the Castlerea Rural District Council is delayed by reason of the fact that no arbitrator has been appointed by the Local Government Board; whether he will call upon the latter body immediately to make such appointment; and whether he will state when this scheme was commenced.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The council did not make application for the appointment of an arbitrator until the 20th February. The Board's Order appointing him was made on Monday last. The improvement scheme was made by the council in November, 1901.

Land Purchase at Castlerea.

MR. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether one of the Estates Commissioners has recently visited certain estates in the Castlerea district of the county Roscommon; and, if so, can he state with what, if any, result.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The reply is in the negative.

Head Constable Gerity, Royal Irish Constabulary.

Mr. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Head Constable Gerity, of Dungannon, county Tyrone, recently made a report against a sergeant under his command for breach of discipline, the result of which report was the transfer of the sergeant by order of the Inspector-General; and can he explain why the sergeant's transfer has been cancelled, and by whose instructions.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The sergeant appealed to the Inspector-General against his proposed transfer on the ground that he intended shortly to retire on pension. The Inspector-General thereupon cancelled the transfer.

Mr. SLOAN: Did the Inspector-General sanction the transfer in the first instance?

Mr. WYNDHAM: Presumably he approved it.

Tipperary Land Commission Appeals.

Mr. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, as there are 166 appeals to the Head Land Commission from the county of Tipperary listed, and as a sitting of the Commission has not been held for years in that county he will have steps taken to have those appeals heard without further delay.

Mr. WYNDHAM: Appeals from South Tipperary were listed for hearing at Waterford on the 22nd instant, but owing to local objections these cases have been withdrawn from the list. It has not been possible yet to arrange a sitting for the disposal of the South Tipperary cases.

Mr. CULLINAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that these cases have been listed over a year?

Mr. WYNDHAM: They would have been heard at Waterford but for local objections.

Mr. CULLINAN: Yes, because of the inconvenience of taking so large a number of Tipperary cases to that town.

Irish Model Schools.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of Mr. Dale's report on the model schools in Ireland, in which it is shown that the cost of these schools is not only higher than that of the ordinary National Irish schools or Convent schools, which only cost the State £1 5s. to £2 10s. per head, but is actually above the cost incurred by the wealthiest English school boards, and that they have failed in one of their chief objects, namely, the united education of children of all creeds, he purposes to continue the grant to those model schools in Ireland.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I replied on Thursday last to a Question on this subject by the hon. and learned Member for North Louth.†

Butson Estate, County Galway.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the Butson Estate, county Galway, which is about to be sold in the Land Judge's Court, there is a large tract of grazing land subject only to a temporary Court lease, while the general body of the tenants have only small impoverished holdings, many of which are constantly inundated by floods; whether he will take steps for the enlargement of the cottier tenancies, and will the provisions of the Purchase Act which prevent advances of public money to new tenants having no real connection with the estate be strictly enforced so as to prevent the rich grass lands, which it is the policy of the Act to redistribute amongst the smaller tenants, being sold to outsiders.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The grazing farm referred to was let before the passing of the Act of 1903, and a collateral agreement for purchase was entered into by the Court with the lessee. The Land Judge cannot disturb this agreement; but there are other grazing lands on the estate which it is proposed to distribute among the tenants should the negotiations at present in progress be successful.

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† See page 732.

MR. ROCHE: Will the right hon. Gentleman direct the Estates Commissioners to purchase this estate in view of the fact that the tenants are prepared to pay £1,000 more than is provided under the agreement.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have no knowledge of the details.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Judge made a statement that——

MR. WYNDHAM: No, but I understand that the Judge sanctioned the collateral agreement.

MR. ROCHE rose to put a further Question but MR. SPEAKER said notice must be given.

Housing of the Working Classes in Irish Towns.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when he proposes to introduce the measure dealing with the housing of the working classes in towns in Ireland promised last session.

MR. WYNDHAM: I see no prospect of introducing the measure promised last session for dealing with the housing of the working classes in towns in Ireland till after Easter.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: May we take it that it will be introduced after Easter.

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, I hope to bring it in in the course of the session but other Bills must first be taken.

Irish Development Grant.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware of the desire that a considerable portion at least of the Irish Development Grant Fund should be devoted to primary education in Ireland; and whether he proposes to consider this desire in framing his Estimate.

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir, I am aware of that desire. It was not, however, possible to meet it in this Estimate prior to a consideration of Mr. Dale's report.

Bodyke Licensing.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state what is the delay in granting to Mrs. Healy, of Bodyke, county Clare, the licence which has been sanctioned for some time; and whether the Inland Revenue Authorities in Ireland will be asked for an explanation.

MR. WYNDHAM: A question of law was involved in the consideration of this case, and by an unfortunate omission the opinion of the Irish Law Officers was not communicated to the Board of Inland Revenue. The omission has now been remedied. The Inland Revenue Authorities are in no way to blame.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Then will the licence be granted at once?

MR. WYNDHAM: The case is now before the Board of Inland Revenue.

Irish Salmon Fisheries.

MR. SHEEHY (Meath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why the date of the commencement of the close season for salmon is not the same along the east coast of Ireland; whether complaints have been made to the Irish Department of injury done to the fishing industry, both by the conservators of the Boyne and the fishermen by the lateness of the date of closing in one section of the coast north of the mouth of the Boyne; and what steps, if any, are to be taken to arrange that the season closes on the same date on both sections, north and south of the Boyne.

MR. WYNDHAM: The dates vary in different localities according to the requirements of each. The netting season for salmon is the same north and south of the mouth of the Boyne, but it differs from the netting seasons in the adjoining Dundalk district. Legislation would be necessary to enable the Department to deal satisfactorily with the operation of the close seasons.

MR. SHEEHY: Is the right hon. Gentleman prepared to introduce a Bill?

MR. WYNDHAM: I will consider that. I cannot promise to do so this session.

Athenry Case.

MR. ROCHE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the fact that at the hearing of the charge, at Athenry petty sessions, against Timothy Hansberry, for unlawfully discharging firearms on the public road, Sergeant Monihan swore that he had received several complaints that shots were fired there during the night, and that the police had to send special patrols to try and find out who was firing the shots; and whether, in view of this statement, he will state on what dates such complaints were made, and reported to the proper officials; and, if no such complaints were made, will he order a prosecution against Sergeant Monihan for perjury.

MR. WYNDHAM: The facts are correctly stated in the Question. I stated on Wednesday last† that no such complaints had been made to the police. The statement was based on the authority of a report made by the district inspector, which I now learn was erroneous. The Inspector-General has conveyed to that officer an expression of strong disapproval of his conduct.

Marlborough Street Training School.

SIR JAMES HASLETT (Belfast, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what action he proposes to take in connection with the Marlborough Street Training School in order to carry out the promise that new buildings would be provided; and will he see that funds will be provided for this purpose in next year's Estimates.

MR. WYNDHAM: Provision has been made in the Estimates for an instalment of a grant of £50,000 for new buildings.

Limerick Cottage Scheme Loans.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state how much of the shilling in the pound rate is required by the different Poor Law unions in the county of Limerick for the repayment of loans sanctioned in connection with the building of cottages under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts in the said unions.

MR. WYNDHAM: Information on this point will be found in a Return (No. 198) laid on the Table of the House last session.

Fair Rents in Kildare.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the tenants on the estates of Mr. Bruce Pryce and Lord Gough have served originating notices to have fair rents fixed by the County Court Judge of Kildare, which in the ordinary course would be heard at the April quarter sessions, and that these landlords have moved to have the cases transferred for hearing to the Land Commission; and, if so, can he say what delay, if any, this procedure will involve in the decision of these cases, and whether it is possible to have them listed for hearing before the next sitting of the Sub-Commission for Athy Union.

MR. WYNDHAM: It will not be possible to include these cases in the list already issued, which will be heard in May next, unless a special Order of the Court to that effect is obtained. Application for such an Order may be made to the Judicial Commissioner sitting at the Fourt Courts. Any delay in the hearing of the cases will not, however, be prejudicial to the parties, as the judicial rents, when fixed, will run from the gale day next following the date of the lodgment of the applications in the office of the Clerk of the Peace.

Owenmore River Drainage.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the inspection of the Owenmore river, in county Sligo, recently ordered by the Department of Agriculture, has yet taken place; and, if so, will he state the nature of the Inspector's report, and say whether it recommends any scheme for the drainage of that river.

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† See page 583.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The inspection has been carried out, and the report of the Inspector will be made to the Department in the course of a few days.

Irish Evicted Tenants.

Mr. CULLINAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in cases where occupiers of evicted farms have purchased their holdings through the Land Commission and are now willing to surrender them for a fair consideration, the Estates Commissioners will be prepared to enter into negotiations for their redemption in order to give effect to the intentions of the Land Act, 1903, to reinstate the tenants or their representatives who had been evicted.

Mr. WYNDHAM: It appears to the Estates Commissioners that the Land Commission have no power to give or advance money to redeem the outstanding instalments of a purchase annuity.

Enniskillen Fair Green.

Mr. EDWARD MITCHELL (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the condition in which Enniskillen Fair Green is kept by the proprietor, who collects tolls therefrom; and whether he will consider the advisability of introducing legislation to oblige owners of such fair greens to erect watering troughs for cattle exhibited at the fair, and for the keeping in proper condition of the surface of the fair greens.

Mr. WYNDHAM: No complaints have been made to the new Department respecting the condition of the Fair Green at Enniskillen. The local authority under the Diseases of Animals Act has power to make regulations for the cleansing of the market place. I am making further inquiry in the matter.

Motor Traffic in County Fermanagh.

Mr. EDWARD MITCHELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the districts in county Fermanagh which have been inspected with a view to the establishment of motor traffic for the purpose of conveying farm produce, and if no districts have yet been viewed in county Fermanagh will he ask that an inspection be made.

Mr. WYNDHAM: No districts in Fermanagh were inspected, I believe, and no advantage would be gained by making an inspection now.

Macroom Labourers Cottage Scheme.

Mr. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, previous to the recent inquiry into a labourers' cottage scheme in the Macroom Union, the district councillors were officially notified that the inquiry was to be held; and whether, seeing that Messrs. Arthur O'Leary and John Moynihan, representatives for the Ballingeary electoral division, received no intimation of any kind, will he state who was responsible for this omission.

Mr. WYNDHAM: An official notification of the date of the inquiry was communicated in the ordinary manner to the district council by the Local Government Board. Notices to the same effect were also published in the local newspapers and placarded throughout the district. It is not the business of the Board, or its inspector, to notify the individual members of the council. This is a matter for which arrangements, if considered necessary, should have been made by the council itself.

Mr. SHEEHAN: Is it the duty of the clerk of the district council to make the notification?

Mr. WYNDHAM: The council makes its own arrangements, I suppose.

Donegal County Council and the Marine Works Acts.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of a resolution passed by the Donegal County Council expressing dissatisfaction with the manner in which the allocation of money to the county under the Marine Works Act was made, complaining that the representations sent by the council to the Chief Secretary had many schemes from the county generally, but that large areas of the county did not receive any benefit whatever under the provisions of the Act since the scheme of allocation was practically settled before consultation with them, and urging on the Chief Secretary the reconsideration of the schemes already virtually or actually approved, and offering to submit to the Chief Secretary the works which in their opinion would, with the money in hand, be, if undertaken, most conducive to the public interests; and what reply has been sent to the Donegal County Council; and what steps, if any, will be taken on the lines indicated by this resolution.

MR. WYNDHAM: The allocation of funds under the Act provides for an expenditure of £15,000 on works in Donegal. These were selected according to their relative importance and after consultation with representatives of the county council. The allocation cannot now be reopened. The decision of the county council to defer further action in respect of certain works is much to be regretted; a continuance of delay in completing the necessary steps may lead to a postponement of the works in question for a year, or even longer.

Telegraph Facilities for Garrison (County Fermanagh).

MR. EDWARD MITCHELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if his attention has been called to the necessity of having a postal telegraph office established in the village of Garrison, county Fermanagh, where a monthly fair is held and a creamery erected; and, if so, will he remedy this public want.

LORD STANLEY: The question of establishing a telegraph office in Garrison, county Fermanagh, was considered in 1901, and an offer was made to establish the office under guarantee, but no reply was received. The business would not be sufficient to enable me to open an office without guarantee.

Riverstown (Sligo) Postal Arrangements.

MR. O'DOWD: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether a memorial signed by the inhabitants of Riverstown, county Sligo, calling for a mid-day delivery of mails in that town has been received by him; whether he is aware that the central distributing station of Ballymote is only seven miles distant, and that letters arriving there by the mid-day limited mail train are not delivered in Riverstown until the following day; and whether, in view of these facts, arrangements will be made by which the postal facilities asked for can be granted.

LORD STANLEY: I have not yet received a memorial asking for a mid-day delivery of letters at Riverstown, county Sligo, but inquiry shall be made on the subject and an answer sent to the hon. Member.

MR. O'DOWD: But the memorial was sent last September.

LORD STANLEY: I can only say I have not seen it.

Egg Frauds against Irish Producers.

MR. ROCHE: I beg to ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether his attention has been directed to frauds committed by egg merchants in Lancashire and other parts of Britain in packing Austrian and other foreign eggs in Irish egg boxes, and selling them as Irish; and, if so, whether he is prepared to take steps to safeguard the interests of the Irish producer.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): No representations have been received by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries on this subject. If the hon. Member will communicate to me any detailed information which he may possess I will arrange for inquiries to be made.

Irish Land Stock.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when it is proposed to issue stock under the Irish Land Act of 1903.

MR. WYNDHAM: The issue of Government $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. stock created by the Irish Land Act of 1903 will be made at the first favourable opportunity, which it is hoped may occur very shortly.

Confidential Cabinet Memoranda.

MR. D. A. THOMAS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will now consider the desirability of making public the document relating to a programme which included preferential tariffs and taxation of food, and which was submitted to the Cabinet in August last, when the document, since published, and entitled Economic Notes on Insular Free Trade, was also under consideration.

MR. LAMBERT: At the same time may I ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that reference has been made and apparent misunderstanding arisen as to the purport of a statement circulated to Cabinet Ministers by the Prime Minister last autumn, he will lay that expression of his views upon the Table of the House.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I do not think any misconception with regard to this Paper has been fallen into by any Gentleman who has read it, and if such misconception exists it can, I am convinced, be completely removed by a second perusal. But with regard to the propriety of publishing it, I would remind the House—those Members who have sat in Cabinets will not require to be reminded—that Cabinet memoranda are as much part of ordinary Cabinet proceedings as are the conversations round the Table. They are, in fact, fragments of that conversation, and are, indeed, of a private character. I do not think that, in the interests of Cabinet government, I could on this occasion, or on any other, assent to the publication of what are part of our confidential intercommunications.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that one of his colleagues in another place has referred specifically to this document?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No colleague of mine has communicated the Paper to the public. If it was referred to it was as I have referred to it, being compelled to do so by the fact of the matter being touched upon by a noble friend.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: Lord Lansdowne went much further than that.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that there are several precedents for the production of Cabinet memoranda when those Cabinet memoranda have become the subject of controversial discussion in both Houses or in either House of Parliament.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is new to me if there are. Perhaps the hon. Member will give me the reference.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Certainly I will do so.

Chinese Labour in Rhodesia.

DR MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the House will be afforded an opportunity of discussing the terms of any Ordinance for the introduction of indentured Chinese labour into Rhodesia before sanction is given to such Ordinance.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot do better than refer the hon. Gentleman to an answer which I gave to a precisely similar Question put to me on the 8th of this month,† in which I pointed out that the principles underlying the introduction of Chinese labour in Rhodesia were identical with those which underlay the introduction of Chinese labour in the Transvaal, and I do not see why there should be two debates on what is in fact a single subject.

DR. MACNAMARA: Is the Fi st Lord aware that the Colonial Secretary has stated here that the Ordinance for Rhodesia is different.

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† See page 456.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not got present to my mind the answer of my right hon. friend to which the hon. Member refers, but I do not think he ever suggested that the principles underlying the Ordinances were different in the two cases.

The Polling of Absentee Voters.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will say whether, and, if so, when it is proposed to set up a Committee for the purpose of inquiring into and reporting on the best method of permitting persons who are necessarily absent from their homes between the nomination of candidates and the day of poll to record their votes.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that in the course of the debate on Friday my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board expressed willingness to refer the subject alluded to in the Question to a Select Committee, and that the offer was not accepted. I do not know, therefore, why the hon. Member should press the matter further. However, I am of opinion that possibly some inquiry may be desirable, though the Government have not decided what form the inquiry should take as likely to lead to useful result, and I must defer answering the Question.

Duration of Speeches.

MR. SOARES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will favourably consider a scheme for limiting the length of speeches on the days set apart for private Members during the remainder of the present session.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The House knows my opinion on the subject, and I have often expressed my sympathy with my hon. and gallant friend the Member for the Chelmsford Division of Essex, whom I do not see in his place. If a Resolution be moved on a private Member's night suggesting that on those nights speeches should be limited, I will take care that no influence of mine is thrown into the opposite scale, and the House will be left to decide this delicate question for itself.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the longest speeches are made by Cabinet Ministers and the Member for Peckham.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not deny that even I may have been a sinner in that respect——

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: We do not mind you so much as the Member for Peckham.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think in a long and varied Parliamentary experience I have heard lengthy speeches even from other quarters of the House.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): What will be the business to-morrow morning and for the rest of the week?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: To-morrow morning's sitting will be devoted to the remaining Supplementary Estimates, Wednesday to the Report of the Vote on Account, and Thursday to the Report of Army and Navy Votes.

THE TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I wish to ask a Question of which I have given private notice to the First Lord of the Treasury, viz.:—What is the exact meaning of the announcement that the King has been advised not to disallow the Labour Ordinance, but that it will not yet be brought into operation; when the restriction will be removed; and when the House will be placed in full possession of the regulations under which the Ordinance will be exercised.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The form of the statement of which the right hon. Gentleman requires an explanation is one which is practically prescribed by statute in this matter. If His Majesty does not disallow an Ordinance, that

Ordinance in the natural course becomes law in the colony. The next Question deals with what is not a question of law, but a question of fact. Certain officials have to be appointed and certain arrangements have to be come to with the Chinese Government before the importation of Chinese labour can become an actuality, but so far as the action of the Government is concerned the Ordinance has been allowed.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman has not said when he expects that Parliament will be informed on the matter.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: My right hon. friend (the Colonial Secretary) informs me that the regulations which will carry out the pledges he has given will be laid before the House very shortly, but I cannot give a similar pledge in regard to the regulations as a whole.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: May I ask whether, in view of the strong feeling in the country, the Government will reconsider their decision to withhold from Parliament the opportunity of discussing the regulations before the Ordinance comes into operation?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If the discussion to which the right hon. Gentleman refers is one relating to the principle on which the Government have acted in permitting Chinese labour to be used in the Transvaal, I think his request is a strange one, for, unless I am greatly mistaken, there have been two discussions upon the subject in another place, there were discussions in relation to it in the debate on the Address, and not less than two divisions have already been taken.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: My point is that the discussions took place without any knowledge on our part as to what the regulations would be.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am glad to hear that the objection of the right hon. Gentleman and his friends is only in a small degree directed to the principle, and deals chiefly with details; but my right hon. friend informs me that all the regulations involving the question of principle either have been, or will be very shortly, laid before the House, and the House has been fully informed of their character.

NEW BILLS.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Prisons in Scotland by abolishing the distinction between general Prisons and ordinary Prisons," presented by Mr. A. Graham Murray; supported by the Lord Advocate; to be read a second time tomorrow, and to be printed. [Bill 126.]

TEINDS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law of Teinds, and to abolish Fiars Prices in Scotland," presented by Mr. Maxwell; supported by Sir Charles Renshaw, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Gordon, and Sir John Stirling-Maxwell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 127.]

SUPPLY [3rd Allotted Day].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1904–5. (VOTE ON ACCOUNT.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £21,500,000, be granted to His Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charges for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905, viz.:—

Civil Services.

Class IV.

	£
Board of Education . .	7,000,000

Class I.

Royal Palaces and Marlborough House . .	26,000
Osborne	10,000
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens	35,000

	£
Houses of Parliament Buildings	16,000
Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain	30,000
Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain	15,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings	20,000
Revenue Buildings	160,000
Public Buildings, Great Britain	160,000
Surveys of the United Kingdom	90,000
Harbours under the Board of Trade	10,000
Peterhead Harbour	10,000
Rates on Government Property	260,000
Public Works and Buildings, Ireland	110,000
Railways, Ireland	60,000

CLASS II.

United Kingdom and England :—

	£
House of Lords Offices	6,000
House of Commons Offices	12,000
Treasury and Subordinate Departments	40,000
Home Office	60,000
Foreign Office	30,000
Colonial Office	25,000
Privy Council Office, etc.	4,000
Board of Trade	75,000
Mercantile Marine Services	30,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade	3
Board of Agriculture	65,000
Charity Commission	15,000
Civil Service Commission	18,000
Exchequer and Audit Department	25,000
Friendly Societies Registry	3,000
Local Government Board	85,000
Lunacy Commission	5,000
Mint (including Coinage)	5
National Debt Office	6,000
Public Record Office	10,000
Public Works Loan Commission	5
Registrar General's Office	18,000
Stationery and Printing	340,000
Woods, Forests, etc., Office of	8,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	30,000
Secret Service	40,000

Scotland :—

	£
Secretary for Scotland	25,000
Fishery Board	8,000
Lunacy Commission	3,000
Registrar General's Office	2,000
Local Government Board	5,000

Ireland :—

Lord Lieutenant's Household	2,000
Chief Secretary for Ireland	12,000
Department of Agriculture	80,000
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	1,000
Local Government Board	25,000
Public Record Office	2,000
Public Works Office	18,000
Registrar General's Office	6,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey	7,000

CLASS III.

United Kingdom and England :—

	£
Law Charges	45,000
Miscellaneous Legal Expenses	28,000
Supreme Court of Judicature	140,000
Land Registry	18,000
County Courts	4,000
Police, England and Wales	17,000
Prisons, England and the Colonies	360,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	140,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum	14,000

Scotland :—

Law Charges and Courts of Law	30,000
Register House, Edinburgh	15,000
Crofters Commission, Scotland	2,000
Prisons, Scotland	38,000

Ireland :—

Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions	32,000
Supreme Court of Judicature, and other Legal Departments	43,000
Land Commission	55,000
County Court Officers, etc.	45,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police	60,000
Royal Irish Constabulary	600,000
Prisons, Ireland	50,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools	55,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum	3,000

Class IV.

United Kingdom and England :—

	£
British Museum	80,000
National Gallery	10,000
National Portrait Gallery	3,000
Wallace Collection	3,000
Scientific Investigation, etc. United Kingdom	22,000
Universities and Colleges, Great Britain, and Intermediate Education, Wales	48,000

Scotland :—

Public Education	750,000
National Gallery	5,000

Ireland :—

Public Education	760,000
Endowed Schools Commissioners	400
National Gallery	2,500
Queen's Colleges	2,500

Class V.

	£
Diplomatic and Consular Services	250,000
Uganda and East Africa Protectorates, and Uganda Railway	300,000
Colonial Services	340,000
Telegraph Subsidies and Pacific Cable	35,000

Class VI.

	£
Superannuation and Retired Allowances	300,000
Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, etc.	2,000
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances	1,000
Hospitals and Charities, Ireland	17,000

Class VII.

	£
Temporary Commissions	25,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	17,587
Repayments to the Local Loans Fund	– –
St. Louis Exhibition, 1904	60,000
Ireland Development Grant	184,000
Total for Civil Services	£14,170,000

Revenue Departments

	£
Customs	350,000
Inland Revenue	830,000
Post Office	3,800,000
Post Office Packet Service	250,000
Post Office Telegraphs	2,100,000
Total for Revenue Departments	£7,330,000
Grand Total	£21,500,000

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said he proposed to move to reduce this Vote by the sum of £500, in order to call attention to the administration of the Education Act. He knew that he could only allude very indirectly to the merits of the Act itself. He wished to ask the Government whether, having regard to the state of things in the country and to the way in which the Act had worked, they would consider the question of mitigating the asperities of the Act and suspending the operation of certain clauses of the Act until the country had had an opportunity of reconsidering the whole question and expressing an opinion upon it. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Board of Education, in one of the debates last year, expressed an opinion that the Act was working without friction. Well, that depended entirely upon what his idea of friction was. If it meant that there were no rows outside the Board of Education it could only be said that that branch of the Government was an exception and differed from every other branch. But that was not what friction meant or ought to mean. The question was—was the Act working smoothly in the country, was it accepted by the country as a settlement of the question? He was told from all parts of the country that one result of the operation of the Act had been that the work thrown by it on the county councils was so enormous, especially in the case of the larger councils, that it had fallen entirely into the hands of the officials; of course in that case there would be no friction, but then that was not what the Government called popular control. He proposed to call attention to the religious difficulty, because he was perfectly certain that until that difficulty was removed the Act would not work without friction. The hon. Gentleman last year suggested that the country was accepting it as a settlement even of the religious difficulty, but there was no section or class of opinion in the country that accepted the Act as a settlement of the religious difficulty; Nonconformists did not accept it, and the Church did not accept it, for the *Church Times* in a leading article only last week said, "nothing but a complete resettlement of the whole question can save us." No Party in the community accepted it as a settlement, and therefore he asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education whether he would do his best to prevent the worst features of the Act from being rigidly carried out until there was a resettlement, or whether he was determined, in the teeth of public opinion, to stick to clauses of the Act that were obnoxious.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): No.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Obnoxious except to hon. Members for Ireland, whom it did not touch. He was referring, of course, to the people who had to carry the Act out and to bear the burden. Every opportunity the country had had of expressing an opinion had been taken advantage of to denounce the Act; and having regard to that, ought not the Government to do something not to press those parts which were obnoxious to the general public? The hon. Gentleman a year ago made merry over the passive resistance movement. At that time only a few hundred summonses had been issued, but the number of summonses had now risen to 18,000, There were 80,000 cases in which final notices had been served, and the movement was growing day by day. No doubt, from the strictly technical point of view, the movement was a conspiracy. But why was not a prosecution proposed? Because the sympathy of the public was with the resisters of the law. The Act was not accepted in England, there was a great protest against it, and the Government ought to reconsider their position even from the point of view of administration.

He desired to speak chiefly with regard to Wales. The Principality was probably the most law-abiding part of His Majesty's dominions, the sole function of Judges of assize usually being to receive a pair of white gloves; therefore what had happened was not an outburst of anarchy or a sudden desire on the part of the people to break the law; it was simply a strong and emphatic protest against an Act which they considered to be unfair. What was the position of the Welsh county councils when the administration of this Act was cast upon them? They knew perfectly well that if they levied a rate for the support of Church schools, which were not popularly controlled, and in which sectarian tests were imposed, there would be a passive resistance movement throughout Wales of an even more extended character than had arisen in England. The large majority of the members of the county councils were Nonconformists, and they had to contemplate the possibility of having to prosecute, to drag to the police court and to sell up their own friends, members of their own faith, and their own political supporters, for not paying rates for the support of institutions which they themselves condemned; and they came to the conclusion that under the circumstances it would be fairer and braver to take upon themselves the responsibility of protesting than to leave it to their constituents, while they simply acted as prosecutors. The Board of Education had instituted an inquiry, which was the first step towards the issuing of a *mandamus*, and that, if persisted in, would mean imprisonment for contempt. Did the Secretary to the Board of Education really think that, having regard to the state of public opinion, this was a case in which he should proceed to extremities? Was it not rather a case in which a broad and statesmanlike view should be taken, and an attempt made to effect a settlement? These gentlemen in Wales had taken a conscientious stand, and it was as difficult to persuade men with strong convictions on a particular subject to abandon their position as to persuade a Government with no settled convictions on any subject to abandon its position.

He was not going to ask the Committee to express any opinion on the action of the Welsh county councils.

Those bodies were responsible to their constituents for the course they had taken. But they had a certain justification in the words of Ministers of the Crown. For instance, the President of the Local Government Board recently, referring to the breaking of the law by motorists, instead of urging prosecutions criticised the action of the police, and pointed out that even the Prime Minister had suffered in this respect. It was not the only respect in which the Prime Minister had suffered through allowing himself to be driven by a headlong *chauffeur*. But the President of the Local Government Board, after criticising the men who put the law into operation, proceeded to say that the law was a farce and must be amended. That was just the position of the Welsh county councils. The right hon. Gentleman was head of the Local Government Board, and the view of the county councils was "Our chief holds that if the law is a bad one we are justified in setting it at defiance, and that it is the duty of a decent Government to amend it." That, too, was the position of the Prime Minister with regard to licensing. The law provided that the necessities of the neighbourhood should be taken into account in the question of licences, but the Prime Minister had declared that that requirement pressed hardly upon the owners of property, and had appealed to the magistrates to suspend the operation of the law until an opportunity arose for amending it. The Welsh county councils contended that the Education Act pressed severely on the consciences of thousands of decent people, that they really could not put it into operation, and that, if it had to be administered, it should be by the Board of Education itself. They were determined not to be made the instruments for oppressing their neighbours, and they appealed to the Government to reconsider the whole situation and bring in an amending Bill. One or two cases out of many might be given as showing that irritation and even exasperation were justified by the administration of the Board of Education. One was the school at Pant Glas in Carnarvonshire. The trustees were Church, but the school had been built largely by the efforts of parishioners who were mainly Nonconformists. Unfortunately the trusts were usually settled—frequently behind the backs of the subscribers—by the donors of the sites. For some time this particular school was run as a Church school, but, as there were few Churchmen in the parish, that could not be carried very far. When repairs and extensions were required, a meeting was summoned of the parishioners, who refused to subscribe unless the school were made in reality a parochial school. The clergyman had to accept the condition, and a representative committee of management was appointed. That was how things stood on the passing of the Act. Then, however, finding he could do without voluntary subscribers, the clergyman immediately obtained from the Board of Education an order for a new board of management, with the result that this school, built largely by Nonconformists, and containing not a single Church scholar, was placed under Church management.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University) reminded the hon. Member that the Order to which he was referring was a Draft Final Order, made in accordance with the trust deed, and liable to be reconsidered by the Board of Education when the usage of the school in times past was brought before it by persons in the locality.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said that was exactly why he was raising the point. These facts had been represented by the county council, but he had yet to learn that the Board had intimated their intention of cancelling the Order. Under that Order the principal officiating minister of the parish was to be *ex officio* a manager, or, failing him, the archdeacon, who lived miles away; the nominated manager was to be appointed from time to time by the principal officiating minister; and the two representative managers were to be appointed by the subscribers—although there were now no subscribers, the whole cost of maintenance being cast upon the country. Another clause—which was inserted in all these Orders—provided that only *bonâ fide* members of the Church of England should be qualified to become managers, and that no person should be entitled to act until he had signed a declaration that he was a member of the Church of England. If this had been a solitary instance he would not have thought much about it, but he had a bundle of similar cases from Carnarvon, in each of which there appeared a disqualification clause by which the office of a foundation manager was determined if the manager in question became a bankrupt, a lunatic, or a Nonconformist. Although all the children in the schools were Nonconformist, not a single dissenting parent was allowed to be a foundation manager, and yet the Secretary to the Board was "mandamusing" county councils for refusing to stand such insolence in the Orders. Another case was the school at Clynnog, in which Mr. Acland took a great interest. The parishioners refused to subscribe for the rebuilding of the schools unless popular management was instituted. A representative board of management was formed and remained in office until the passage of the Act. The vicar was a member, but he was only one among five or six, and the system worked uncommonly well. Immediately after the passing of the Act an Order was obtained and there again was the same clause that they must be members of the Church of England. [MINISTERIAL cries of Hear, hear!] Hon. Members opposite seemed to think that that was a fair thing. This was a parish where the proportion of Nonconformists to Churchmen was 100 to nine and the only school in the parish built for Nonconformists with the parishioners money had been declared a Church of England school, and no Nonconformist could become one of the foundation managers. He thought that was a monstrous injustice.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said the Board of Education must pay some attention, under Clause 11, to the principles on which the education given in the schools had been conducted in the past. The Board of Education always regarded evidence of usage in the matter in order to settle the draft Orders which were sent to the local authority and other persons interested in the matter. The local authority had not apparently interested itself sufficiently in this matter to make any representation to the Board of Education. If either the local authority or any person interested in the matter had done so the matter would have been considered.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said the hon. Baronet must have forgotten that the county council of Carnarvonshire had made representations but the grievance had not been redressed. As a matter of fact he had a copy that morning of the representations made by the county council of Carmarthen to the Board of Education, but he had not the date.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) said they were only Draft Orders.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said if the Secretary to the Board of Education told him that cases of that sort would be set right then his object would have been served. Take the case of Carmarthen. That was a very crucial case. He could give the Committee the case of a mining village where the rector appointed his two daughters and an old housekeeper at the rectory as the foundation managers. It had been stated that this was a parish 1,200 feet above the sea level. Evidently it was so much above all ordinary ideas of fair play. He was aware that the idea that one of these managers was a servant at the rectory had been repudiated, but he had made further inquiries and found that this statement was correct. One of his complaints was that under these Orders it was competent for the clergyman of a parish, practically, to have his own board of management appointed, Take the Carmarthen schools. With regard to an overwhelming majority of them the Nonconformists were in the proportion of three or four to one and in most cases the Nonconformists helped to build the schools. The hon. Baronet had appointed a very able lawyer to inquire into the matter and he wished to know whether he was going to inquire only into the technical breaches of the Act or into the whole educational condition of Carmarthen and report to the Government what the state of the case really was. Those schools in Carmarthen were under complete clerical control. The vicar was ex-officio manager and in some cases appointed the second member. Then the two together co-opted members, and in order to make them completely under the control of the minister the co-opted members retired one in the second and the other in the third year. Then they had to be re-elected by those who remained on the Board. The two clergymen on the Board could either elect or re-elect the co-opted members, and therefore instead of being perfectly independent their tenure on the Board was at the mercy of the two clerical members. That was what the Board of Education had sanctioned in regard to schools maintained exclusively out of public funds. There was the case of a village in Carmarthenshire where a school was built by the parishioners, and there was only one Churchman in the parish at the time. The clergyman resided in an adjoining parish. The old British school fell into a state of bad repair and the clergyman said that they must have a new school. Everybody contributed to the school and those who could not give cash contributed something else. Some gave the use of a horse and cart and others gave money, and they helped to build the school either by contributing in this way or giving their labour. To the astonishment of the parishioners the trust had been given over to the National Society. Naturally the parishioners made a protest, but it was no good, and the school was now being run as a Church school while practically there were no others but Nonconformists in the parish. That exasperated and irritated the people beyond endurance, and there were limits to human endurance. Here was a case of a trust in the hands of the Board of Education, and an Order that the foundation managers must sign a declaration that they were members of the Church of England and the moment they ceased to be members they were disqualified. The might be the best men in the parish, but the moment they joined the religion of the majority of the people who built the school they had to go. The people of Carmarthen declared that they would rather go to prison than pay the education rate under such circumstances.

The Prime Minister said, "Why do you not build your own schools? The lavish generosity of Churchmen built these schools, and now you want to collar them." Churchmen had not built them. There was an inquiry by the Charity Commissioners—not a very partisan body from the Nonconformist point of view—into these trusts among others, and case after case would be found where the schools had not been built by the Anglican Church. Besides, if the parishioners there really wanted little denominational schools of their own they had got to build them. He made an inquiry into the case of Carmarthen, and he found that there was not a single parish throughout the county which had not an excellent school attached to some chapel or other, most of them better than the national school from the point of view of light, air, and ventilation. They were more modern and excellent buildings. What would happen if they followed the advice of the Prime Minister and took advantage of the clause in the Act which enabled them to set up denominational schools. He impressed this on the Committee in order to show that they were not making a fight for their own sect, and that it was not merely intolerance. Supposing they utilised each denominational school they could get more than thirty children and they could get the county council readily to acknowledge it, and they could go to the Board of Education, and that Board would not refuse it. What would happen was this. In a parish with 120 children all now in one school and brought up together as one little community, they would have three hostile wrangling little camps—the Church crowd in one, the Congregational crowd in another, and the Methodists in a third. That was as bad from the social point of view as could be imagined. What about the educational point of view. From the sectarian point of view it would be a first rate thing. It would mean that the county council would furnish the school; every desk would be bought out of the rates instead of being subscribed for by little farmers who had not too much money to spare. More than that, they could get a teacher, and although they could not lay it down as a condition of his tenure, it would be an understanding that he would be a Sunday school teacher, that he would play the organ, and that he would be a sort of lay curate for the minister in the little church. There would also be one or two little assistants who would be most useful to the Congregational chapel in the district. If they were simply seeking sectarian ends they would follow the Prime Minister's advice, wreck the parish, and ruin education. He thought it was to their honour that they preferred to submit to hardship and grievance, and the intolerance and greed of one sect, until they got the thing remedied, rather than ruin the education of their children for a whole generation. The Congregationalists were practically the National Church in that community; they were an overwhelming majority of the public. The Anglican communion was a negligible quantity so far as numbers were concerned. He did not want to say anything disrespectful. The Church said, "We want to have our own school, and have our children taught by our own teacher—a man of our own communion. We think that is necessary for the religious instruction of our children." Congregationalists would naturally prefer a man of their own religious opinion, and he would be useful to them, but they preferred to take the interest of the whole community into account. Seeing that the Nonconformists were taking a perfectly unselfish point of view, he asked the Board of Education not to proceed to the extremity of sending men to prison for taking a perfectly enlightened, fair, and honourable view of their duty.

There was no county council that had treated the members of the opposite party or different communions more fairly than the county council of Carmarthen. It was a Nonconformist council by three or four to one. There was a vacancy in the clerkship of the council a short time ago, and although there were applications from Nonconformists, they elected a Churchman. It was idle to suggest that it was purely sectarian rancour that had driven them to this position. They had really done it for the protection of their own children, and the protection of their own people, and he asked the hon. Member to consider whether it was not better, from the point of view of education, from the point of view of the Government itself, that a perfectly fair inquiry should be instituted into the circumstances rather than that the Government should do as they had done. He knew they had been misled by the Bishops. He was perfectly certain that they were told by certain Bishops that the Welsh county councils would not take that line. He asked the Government whether it was not a case for statesmanship and not for police action. It was not a case for threats. These people were fighting a perfectly unselfish battle. They had been supporters of religious equality. In the election of 1868 they fought for the principle of religious equality for Ireland with no promise of anything for themselves. These farmers in Carmarthenshire defied their landlords then, and voted Liberal for the first time. There were scores of them evicted. There was an inquiry by the House of Commons into the circumstances of the evictions, and it ended in the passing of the Ballot Act. When the Welsh people had suffered all this for religious equality in Ireland, he thought he could appeal to Irish Members not to vote for sending men to prison when they were going to apply the same principle to themselves. These men were taking a perfectly broad view of the whole situation. He was speaking, be believed, the opinion of the vast majority of the people in Wales when he said that they would rather have a settlement than strike, but if the Government persisted in pushing this to an extremity, they were prepared to endure any penalty the law could put upon them. The county councils of Wales met as a body, and sent a reasonable invitation to the Bishops to meet them and discuss the possibility of arriving at a settlement before they ever threatened at all. What did the Bishops do? Three of the four Bishops refused to meet the county councils. He knew it was the Bishops who were now pressing the Government to prosecute the Welsh county councils. He could well understand that hon. Members opposite could hardly conceive that to be the case, and he said that to their credit. He was sorry to say it was the case. It was Episcopal pressure which was now inducing the Government to take this action. He did not believe the Government wished to do it. They were willing to let matters slide. The county councils in Wales were willing to make things as easy as possible until a settlement was arrived at. One Bishop met them, and he said—

> "We want facilities for religious instruction by our own people. We want first of all the syllabus of the London School Board. We want facilities to teach our own children our own creed; but we do not regard the syllabus of the London School Board as sufficient."

What was the answer of the Welsh county councils? He invited the attention of the Committee to this again before they determined that these county councils should be prosecuted. The official answer given by the Welsh county councils was that they would advocate the complete and unqualified acceptance of the proposals made in the Bishop of St. Asaph's memorandum as to arrangements to be made for religious instruction in all schools, for securing that such religious instruction should be regular and effective, and for seeing that there were special facilities for Church children. But the other Bishops refused to accept the proposals of the Bishop of St. Asaph. He would ask who, in these circumstances, was responsible for this unpleasant position? Was it the county councils who were prepared to meet the clergy? The councils even offered a rent to them for their schools. He asked the hon. Gentleman to say in his reply whether, rather than prosecute, he did not think it a case for a little toleration, a little consideration, and a real inquiry into the conditions. The danger of Ministers always was to apply what they thought was a strong hand in a situation of this kind. The real strong man was the man who was strong to take the hazards of the right course. The hon. Gentleman had got to choose which course he would take. If he produced strife and sedition in Wales, it would do him no credit. On the other hand, if he took a wise and statesmanlike course, he would bring peace to Wales and earn the gratitude of the Welsh people.

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item, Class 4 (Board of Education), be reduced by £500."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

Mr. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire) said he wished to support his hon. friend in the strong appeal he had made to the Government. The speech of his hon. friend was based not upon the religious question, but upon educational grievances, upon the damage which was being done to the administration of the Act of 1902 in Wales by circumstances of a remarkable kind, to which he called attention. He himself felt he had some title to appeal to the Government on this matter, because, from the beginning, he sympathised with what he conceived to be the main and ruling purpose of the Act of 1902. That purpose he took to be to place all education, higher as well as primary, in the hands of a representative body—the county councils having been chosen for the purpose—and therefore to lay the foundation of a system which would develop into an adequate national system of education all over the country. He pointed out at the time, both inside and outside the House, that what was then done was only laying the foundation; that there was a superstructure to be raised on the top, and apparently a price to be paid to the Church for removing obstacles, which required consideration hereafter. He was unable then to vote for the Government Bill because of the Church clauses, nevertheless he was strongly sympathetic with the purpose of the hon. Baronet and with the view of the Government which, as he conceived it, recognised that we had outgrown the School Board stage with its limitations to primary education, and a stage at which there was no School Board representation at all in large parts of the country. He believed that the hon. Baronet had been sincerely desirous of doing the best for national education, and that the distinguished permanent officials who assisted him were also anxious to make the most of their opportunities. He believed that a better spirit as regarded education was abroad now than for a very long time past, and yet they found the administration of this Act was being carried out in Wales in the fashion described by his hon. friend, and this must convince any impartial and fair-minded man that they were on the verge of a great peril for the very system of education which the Government had called into existence. Education could not be administered efficiently in the teeth of the opposition of a whole people. They could not *mandamus* a nation any more than they could draw an indictment against a nation. They could not compel a whole people, to whom they had entrusted the working of a system, to carry it out in a fashion repugnant to their own views and the views of their constituents. It was well deserving of attention that the Welsh county councils had not been accused of that. They appeared to have welcomed the principle of the Act, but had found it was impossible for them, in the face of public opinion, to dminister the Church clauses and to maintain the voluntary schools out of the rates under the schemes cast.

The Motion of his hon. friend in substance was—"Let us have an inquiry into this matter on a much larger scale than is now done." It was all very well to say that they could have a Commissioner to make an inquiry under the Act of 1902; but the Commissioner would go down and take a strictly legal view of the question; it would be impossible for him to take that broad view of the subject which was necessary if the truth was to be brought before their minds. In that state of things, the question was—what was the position of the Government on this matter? He had considerable sympathy with the difficulty in which the hon. Baronet was placed. There was no doubt that his powers were very much narrowed by the chief clauses of the Act of 1902, and, if this were the place to discuss that Act, he would point out that that ought to make him gravely consider whether it was not the duty of the Government to come to Parliament to deal with these clauses. Wales was a very good test case. There they had the people as keen about education as in any other part of the Empire. Their education was far in advance of the general system in England or, he believed, in Scotland. In the latter country elementary education might have done well; but they had nothing to rival the intermediate education in Wales. In that state of things, the hon. Baronet had to administer the Act in Wales among a people who were as keen to make the most of it, and get the most out of it, as any in this land. But what was the situation? The whole country was in revolt, and from very obvious causes. They could not work an Act of this kind among a people like that without exercising the greatest toleration and forbearance, and without very considerably modifying the clauses of the Act of 1902. There never would be peace in that country nor would the condition of things be tolerable so long as the Act was administered religiously and not educationally. It would have been infinitely better for the administration of the hon. Baronet if he had been able to say—"I have nothing to do with religious controversies; I am thankful that I am relieved from the necessity of entering on a course which can only end by bringing me into collision with either one religious body or another." The hon. Baronet had taken another course. He was not quite sure whether the hon. Baronet was driven to it by the clauses of the Act. The hon. Baronet used an expression that the draft Orders were made in correspondence and were subject to reconsideration. That was a hopeful expression. What he asked was —how, even in correspondence, had the hon. Baronet come to make Orders like these? If he said he had been forced to make them under Section XI., Sub-section 4, then his duty at a very early stage was to have said, "In the case we have in Wales, it is obviously essential that we should come to Parliament for further powers; and in the meantime I will make interim Orders only." But he had taken the hon. Baronet to guard himself by saying that under Section XI. he had considerable discretion in the matter. If the hon. Gentleman had discretion then, he contended, it would have been better had these Orders not been made, even in draft. They were calculated to awaken more than suspicion—a real hostility on the part of the people who felt a grievance. How could they force people to pay out money for voluntary education in voluntary schools under conditions such as these Orders laid down?

It could not be forgotten that this was not merely a Nonconformist question in Wales. It was, first, an education question; and, second, if the view which his hon. friend took and which was supported by some of the most distinguished Churchmen in Wales, such as the Bishop of St. Asaph, had been adopted this controversy never would have arisen. A compromise was offered by which they would have adopted a certain amount of the London School Board system, and have given access during what were technically school hours, at the very beginning of the day, to those who wished to give religious education. Had that compromise been accepted it might have been that these Orders might have been framed in such a scheme if the hon. Baronet conceived he had latitude under Section XI. But the compromise was rejected; and how could the Government come forward and hope for success in the administration of the Act in Wales unless they were prepared to over-rule the more militant Churchmen and take the view of the minority of very large-minded Churchmen in that country? At the same time, he thought there might be great difficulty in such a moderate compromise. He was rather suspicious himself of what was called Bible teaching in the schools. He understood the view of the hon. Member for Greenwich was that the religious aspirations of people who desired Church teaching could not be satisfied under any mere system of that kind. What was wanted by such people was real Church schools, carried on in the spirit of the Church, and where religion was taught under direction of the Church. But his contention was that that was no business of the State, and he doubted whether it was any man's business in the State to give simple Bible teaching. What was simple Bible teaching would depend on the opinions of particular people. It was perfectly impossible to carry out a system of education which would enable the State to solve these religious conundrums and adjustments of dogma. The less the State had to do with religious dogmas the more it would be posssible to do for education. He believed it would have been possible to have framed an Order which would have enabled all the denominations—including the Anglican—to get access to the schools, with certain advantages to those which had claims to the title of founders, and which would not have given rise to the vast seething controversy which had been aroused throughout Wales. There were three classes of people to blame in this matter. First of all, Parliament for having given way so much to the demands of the Church in framing what might have been a really great educational system for this country. Secondly, the Church for having insisted too much on its rights. The Government ought to have had courage to meet that insistence if their educational system was not to be brought to abject failure. Thirdly, the Department, for having made these draft Orders. Even draft Orders were calculated to excite suspicion or to provoke hostility, and the sooner they disappeared the better; and, therefore he hoped they were about to see the last of them in their present form. They might have the same thing in Yorkshire or East Anglia as in Wales, and wherever religious feeling ran high and the majority of the people were Nonconformist. Was that a condition of things that was good for education? He was looking at these things from the educational point of view and as a friend of those in this, or any Government, who made an effort to raise national education; and he would say to the hon. Baronet that if he wished to give the people confidence in the administration of the educational system of the country it was necessary to modify and avoid the kind of doctrine which had brought about such a controversy in Wales, and in many parts of England.

*Sir WILLIAM ANSON said the Education Act had been attacked from a great many points of view. The hon. Member for Carnarvon commenced by saying it had met with universal disapproval throughout the country. If that were so one would naturally seek for evidence of the fact from the local authorities who were concerned in the administration of the Act. If there had been universal disapproval surely there would have been some disinclination expressed on the part of the local authority to undertake the administration, but there were only ten local authorities in England and Wales whose schemes had not been submitted and published and actually approved by the Board: there were only four whose schemes had not yet been approved by the Board, but which were in course of publication, and there was not one local authority which had failed to send in a scheme. It might therefore be assumed that the Act had very considerable educational merits inasmuch as almost every local authority had undertaken to administer it, and all would do so if they could administer some portion of it in their own way. He did not want to argue over again what had been so often argued, nor did he wish to endeavour to calculate the infinitesimal portion of the rate which Nonconformists might be called upon to contribute to the religious teaching given in the denominational schools. He would rather ask what was meant when the hon. Member for Carnarvon said the Nonconformists were desirous of having a settlement; that they would not build schools for their own denomination; that they would rather wait till the matter was settled. Did this mean that they would wait till the schools passed into their hands? They appeared to have no scruple in compelling others, whatever form of religious belief they professed, to pay for the schools that they liked, in which the secular instruction was the same as in the voluntary schools but in which the religious teaching was what was called simple Bible teaching, which might be the teaching of mere religious history, or which might convey dogma in various forms. But those were the schools of which the hon. Member and his friends approved and those were the schools they desired people to pay for. Did they wish to drive every one into schools in which the form of religious teaching was given which they themselves preferred, or did they wish to secularise education altogether? [OPPOSITION cries of "No."] He would like to know which of these views the hon. Member held.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I thought I said I accepted the proposals of the Bishop of St. Asaph on the point.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said he understood the hon. Member to say in January last that the Bishop of St. Asaph had entirely misunderstood him if he thought for a moment that denominational religious teaching could be given in school hours. Therefore the alternative was either the secularisation of education, which he ventured to think would not be popular in this country, or a religious tyranny by which everybody would be required to send their children to elementary schools in which teaching was given which the Nonconformists, and the Nonconformists especially, if not alone, preferred.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said they accepted the proposals of the Church with regard to the basis of religious instruction altogether, and so far as the times were concerned they accepted the proposals of the Department that the time should be put back in order to enable the Church children to receive such special religious teaching as they required.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said he was right in restating the fact that the hon. Member denounced in January any idea that religious denominational teaching should be permitted in school hours.

MR LLOYD-GEORGE said the hon. Baronet ignored the point, that the suggestion that the school hour should be put back came from the Board of Education. That was accepted by the Welsh County Councils.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said it came to this, that denominational teaching would not be given in school hours. He would like to know how far the dissatisfaction so far as it had been exhibited in England and Wales was really a genuine outburst of public opinion [AN HON. MEMBER: The by-elections will tell you.] or how far it had been fostered by the hon. Member and his friends. He had been taken to task for speaking of the passive resistance movement as a political movement, but he did not think he was altogether wrong. The hon. Member having quoted a circular letter sent out by the president of the National Free Church Council and Dr. Clifford, the Chairman of the Passive Resistance Committee, also from a speech made by the hon. Member for Carnarvon at Portsmouth at a passive resisters' luncheon, confessed, that with every respect to the genuine expression of conscience that had no doubt found its place in some part of this movement, he could not but regard the movement as stimulated and organised by an energetic political Party for political purposes.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Have the Bishops done nothing?

*Sir **WILLIAM ANSON** said in the course of this organisation there had been evidence of abundant misrepresentation. He would give to the House as an instance a resolution passed by a meeting of the Methodist Free Churches of Leeds and Bradford in opposition to the Act for the reason amongst others that it had abolished School Boards and substituted for them education boards which gave the clergy of one section of the Church an almost absolute authority in determining the educational policy of the nation. He had not been able to refrain from pointing out in reply to those resolutions that the board schools were only transferred from the popularly elected School Boards to the popularly elected county councils; that it could not be said that the clergy had a considerable place on the education committees of the county councils; that he should have thought there were very few clergymen on those committees; and that the voluntary schools were brought for the first time, so far as secular education was concerned, entirely under popular control; while the religious teaching there given was taken out of the control of the parson and brought under the control of the school managers. The answer which he had received was that it would have been fairer if he had taken the resolutions as a whole, especially the last resolution. The last resolution was as follows—

> "That the Act violates the sacred rights of conscience, involving acts which interfere with the solemn relation between God and the individual soul."

He confessed he felt it impossible to argue further with persons who applied such solemn expressions to the question of paying probably a few halfpence on a rate to teach children the religion of their parents. His own feeling was that he would willingly contribute to any form of religious teaching which would impart to the persons who passed those resolutions some of the elements of Christian truthfulness and Christian charity. Another form of misrepresentation was used with regard to these "Orders" for foundation managers. The practice was that the Board of Education sent a form of inquiry and received back that form filled up as to the conditions of the trust deed and the wishes of the managers, and the Board did not act further than to conform with the conditions of the trust deed and the wishes of the managers. The Order was circulated among the people of the neighbourhood, and anybody interested in the school could object to it if it did not carry out the conditions of the trust deed or the wishes of the managers or the usages of the school. In the *Daily News* of December 6th a statement appeared as to Orders respecting six schools alleged to have been entirely managed by Nonconformists, and now transferred by the Orders of the Board to the management of Churchmen. As a matter of fact five of the Orders were draft Orders awaiting representations from the locality; in the sixth case no Order had been made at all, and every Order made was made as asked for by the managers. One of the two cases mentioned by the hon. Member was under the consideration of the Board, and in one of the cases attacked by the *Daily News* three out of the four managers were to be free from any Church qualifications. Only one representation had been received from the local education authority of Carmarthen, but a general complaint was made that a communicant qualification was required. In no case in the Carmarthenshire Orders was a communicant qualification required, as it had been the practice of the Board to leave out that qualification unless it appeared in the trust deed, and was especially demanded by the managers. In every case any representations made in respect to draft Orders had been considered, and as regarded Carmarthen the representation from the local authority would be the subject of an inquiry to be held.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE asked whether the hon. Gentleman would give instructions that the inquiry should cover all the circumstances and conditions and not be subject to technical restrictions.

*Sir **WILLIAM ANSON** had every reason to hope that the inquiry would be full and complete.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE pointed out that the nature of the inquiry would depend entirely upon the instructions given. Would the hon. Gentleman instruct the Commissioner to inquire into all the circumstances; unless he did so, all sorts of things might be ruled out of a technical inquiry.

***SIR WILLIAM ANSON** thought the Board would impress upon Mr. Lawrence that the inquiry should take as complete a form as possible regarding everything that might affect the judgment of the Board in making the Order which might have to be made as the result of the inquiry.

He would now turn to the trouble which had occurred in Wales. This began with a conference held at Cardiff last year, in which the hon. Member laid down the startling proposition that voluntary schools would be better off than when they had to rely on subscriptions. That, he was sorry to say, was not so; they had suffered a loss of £12,000 a year. Anglesey schools, perhaps, were better off, but it was not the case generally that schools were better off under the grants. Another conference followed at Swansea, at which a "no rate" resolution was passed, and, though the movement did not require so extended an organisation as did the passive resistance agitation in England, great efforts were made by the hon. Member and his friends to prevent the Act being properly worked. At the Swansea meeting the hon. Member denounced the councils of South Wales for their willingness to carry out the law.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE remarked that they had all come round since.

***SIR WILLIAM ANSON** said that was the result of the hon. Member's endeavours. At that time there were certainly three counties prepared to carry out the Act. The Carmarthenshire Education Committee had an interesting discussion on the subject, in the course of which a "no rate" resolution was proposed and rejected, the chairman characterising the resolution as unchristian, immoral, and cowardly, inasmuch as it inflicted suffering on the innocent children throughout the country. Subsequently, however, the council was terrorised into departing from its decision; a number of Welsh Members of Parliament went down and exercised their influence throughout the county, and when the council met crowds of people attended the meeting, yelling as each vote in favour of the rate was given, and cheering every vote to the contrary. It was under these benign influences that the Carmarthenshire County Council passed a "no rate" resolution. The result of this policy had been deplorable. According to the reports of inspectors, in some schools attendance had fallen off and even ceased in consequence of there being no funds to provide fires, in others coals were supplied by the teachers, and in other instances materials and apparatus could not be provided. There had been refusals to appoint teachers and to make payments beyond the Parliamentary grant. He asked those Members of the House whose efforts had induced the Welsh County Councils to decline to put the Act into operation, so far as the voluntary schools were concerned, whether the Act could be said to have had a fair trial in Wales? Clearly it had not. Not only had the Act not had a fair trial, but the Nonconformists, who had endeavoured to prevent its having a fair trial, boasted of their law-breaking propensities. The Rev. Owen Campbell, speaking at a conference of the Haverfordwest and District Free Church Council, was reported to have said that Nonconformists had always been law breakers and it was by breaking laws that, they could get them repealed, Such a sentiment appeared to him to point to anarchy.

He hoped the House did not think that he was insensible to the difficulties of this religious question. No one who had been engaged, as he had been for more than a year, in administering this Act could fail to be painfully conscious of the continual irritation and difficulties which were aroused by the recurrence of these disputes over the appointment of foundation managers and the payments of the small amounts which the councils were asked to pay to the voluntary schools in Wales. He knew that the difficulty was great. The great difficulty in arriving at a solution such as he should like to see effected was to be found not in the

Act of 1902, but in the law of 1870. During the debates on the Education Act he said there was another settlement of the religious difficulty which he hoped that they would reach some day, although the Act as it was then passed appeared to him to be a fair compromise. Believing as he did that education should be part of the child's life, and that therefore its religion should be part of its education, he desired to see a system under which religious teaching should be available for all, and denominational religious teaching for all who wanted it, in school hours, protected by a rigid conscience clause. But at the time of the passing of the Education Act they had to deal with 14,000 voluntary schools, with their buildings and with their trust deeds; they had to consider the condition of those schools, the immense sums which had been spent by the Church of England upon them, the infinitesimal proportion of the rate which was to be paid by those who did not accept the denominational teaching in those schools, and the necessity of bringing the voluntary schools into line as regarded secular education. Therefore he held that the compromise was a fair one. [OPPOSITION laughter and cries of "No," and MINISTERIAL cries of "Arrangement."] He would accept the word "arrangement." He contended that it was a fair arrangement and that it should have a fair trial. So far as he was able to insist upon it, it should have a fair trial. They were instituting an inquiry with regard to the county of Carmarthen, and when the Board of Education were put in possession of the facts they would have to consider what form of Order they must make to provide that the Act should be carried into effect. He thought that the Order might prove to be more effective than the hon. Member for Carnarvon supposed.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am certain it will not.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said if it was not effective, if the powers possessed by the Board were insufficient or inapplicable, he should have to ask for further powers and he should do so without hesitation. He should like to ask hon. Gentlemen on the Front Bench opposite how they regarded this disobedience to the law by members of county councils who, having voluntarily offered themselves for election and having been elected to carry out certain duties imposed upon them, deliberately and avowedly cast the law aside. Did hon. Members opposite condone those actions? Did they approve of them? If they did not approve of them, would they have the honesty and courage to say so? In order to carry out a political purpose these councils had practised, if he might use the eloquent language of the Leader of the Opposition, "methods of barbarism"; they had neglected the children of their elementary schools, they had left them without books and materials, they had left them to remain cold and wet in the winter months for want of fuel. He doubted whether the country would approve of those actions, stimulated as they were by political animosities and religious bigotry—by the political animosities and the religious bigotry, he might almost add the personal ambition, of certain members of the Nonconformist body in Wales.

SIR EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick) said the hon. Baronet's speech had left hon. Members on his side of the House more hopeless than they had ever been of any amendment of the Education Act from the present Government. They knew when the Government were passing the Act that it was their opinion that the Act would not raise strong feeling in the country. They had, until the hon. Baronet spoke, some hope that the Government might have realised now that their anticipations were wrong and that strong feeling had arisen. The hon. Baronet did not believe in the genuineness of the feeling because he said it was political. It was precisely because the feeling was strong and genuine, and because the sense of injustice was deeply felt, that the matter had become political. It had been said that those on the Opposition side of the House had been able to work up this feeling and make the Education Act a political question, but a little while ago it used to be hinted that they were in a hurry to take up the Education Act because the feeling in the country was so strong. Was the organisation of the passive resisters not a genuine feeling? Was tariff reform not organised and was the Anti-Corn Law League not organised. Was there no feeling behind those movements? The hon. Baronet laid down two propositions—that anything that was political, as soon as it became so, was not genuine, and anything which was organised was not sincere. That was the hopelessness of the position. Even the Prime Minister had not shown his inability to understand Nonconformist feeling with regard to the Education Act so perversely, if he might use the word without offence, as the hon. Baronet had done. The hon. Baronet seemed to think that the grievance was an infinitesimal one with regard to the payment of rates, because it was only a few halfpence contributed out of the rates, which went to denominational teaching. Supposing it was a matter of principle or of conscience, the question of a few halfpence might be just as serious as the question of a few pounds. The whole root of the matter was not objection to denominational teaching, but objection to denominational management of public elementary schools. The hon. Baronet spoke of Nonconformists wishing to force children into schools of their own particular pattern. The hon. Member for Carnarvon had given cases in which the whole of the children of the Nonconformists were being forced into Church schools under the present Act — in one case all the children in Carmarthen, and in another case 100 children out of 109. He thought that of all the clauses which had better come out of the Act the particular clause which offered facilities for the setting up of a number of small schools was about the most anti-educational. They could not divide the educational *status* of the ordinary parish up into a number of small schools. They must have one school, and to that school everybody must go. Hon. Members on the other side were always saying that it was a great hardship for the children of Church parents to be forced into a school where the atmosphere was Nonconformist, but they never seemed to realise that the hardship was just as great for Nonconformist children to be forced into a Church school.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said he did realise that.

SIR EDWARD GREY asked if other hon. Members opposite realised it. The fact was that, though this might be greater in degree in Wales, it was a grievance which was widespread over the whole country. The Vice-President was going to have an inquiry into Wales. He did not know how far the inquiry was to go. The hon. Gentleman had told them that it was to be very ample, very thorough, and very full, but he had hinted that it might probably lead to a *mandamus.*

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: I only said it might result in our having to make an Order. I did not say it probably would.

SIR EDWARD GREY said he would withdraw the word "probably" and say that, although he did not know what the result of the inquiry would be, the only possible result which he did put hypothetically to the House was that of a *mandamus*, subject to this that, if the *mandamus* did not prove effective, they must take some stronger measures. That was not a very hopeful spirit in which to conduct an inquiry. He wished personally that the inquiry was going to consider not only Wales, but how far it was possible to bring the provisions of the Act into conformity with the opinion of the country. If they had an inquiry of that kind it would soon be turned, not into an inquiry as to the conduct of the Welsh county councils, but an inquiry into the need of an amendment of the Act itself. The Vice-President deplored the friction constantly arising with regard to the administration of the Act, but it never seemed to occur to him that the reason for the friction was the Act itself. He knew the hon. Gentleman sincerely deplored that friction because he was a friend of education, but he did not see that until the Act was amended they would not get rid of that friction. They would not get rid of the friction till, as the result of the inquiries which might take place, they came to the conclusion that their system of elementary education must be a national system and that they must have all their schools on one footing. To do that he was quite aware that they would have to take over a large number of schools which were now privately owned, and that, so much had the expenditure of the country got out of hand, it was difficult to find the money. But when some of our wasteful expenditure had been brought under control, then they might have money to devote to education and an amendment of the Act which would at last bring peace and thoroughness into education.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) said he would be interested to hear how the right hon. Baronet would bring all these schools into one pattern and how he would deal with the Cowper-Temple Clause.

SIR EDWARD GREY replied that now that all the schools were practically supported by public money, they must be all under representative management. The difficulty was that a large number of these schools were privately owned, but a great many of these privately owned schools had been largely built out of public money. They would have to deal with these, in his opinion, just as they dealt with land or buildings that were required for public purposes. It was absurd that where school buildings already existed in a parish, and there was only need for one, that the community should be put to the expense of building an entirely new school. They would have to apply compulsory powers of purchase to them, and when they came to that they would have to consider how much money would require to be spent before they were in thorough order. They would have to give to the county councils the power of taking these schools and treating them as provided schools. To give the County Councils the power of taking the schools they would have to find money out of the taxes to put the educational system on a satisfacfactory basis. They had dealt in Ireland with the system of dual ownership of land. The dual system in education was keeping education back, and there would be no settlement, he believed, and no real progress in this country until we got rid of the dual system. The Prime Minister had raised the question as to how they would deal with the Cowper-Temple clause in regard to religious teaching. That was, of course, a question on which opinion might greatly differ, and on which he was perhaps only entitled to speak his own opinion. He should say that, so far as religious teaching was concerned, he had no objection whatever to full liberty of religious teaching provided out of private funds and given outside of school hours. He would give every facility in the way of arranging the school hours for that instruction being given to children whose parents desired that they should have it. As to whether they would have secular education only, or whether they would have Board school teaching, there might be difference of opinion, but he was convinced that if they got over the difficulty of management and control, and got one system of education, they would find every section of religious opinion in the country much more reasonable and conciliatory than they expected.

LORD EDMUND TALBOT (Sussex, Chichester): Do you propose to force Catholic children into these schools?

SIR EDWARD GREY said he knew the Roman Catholic difficulty was a great one in this matter, and he respected their feelings. If they made up their minds to have one system he believed they would find all sections of religious opinion more reasonable, conciliatory, and open to compromise than people were aware of at present. He expressed his personal opinion on that matter. The county councils were not worked up by the speeches of his hon. and learned friend the Member for Carnarvon. No one in the House would under-rate the eloquence and force of the hon. Member's speeches, but he would himself be the first to resent the idea that he and other hon. Members had manufactured the opinion in Wales which had made the county councils act as they had done. The action of the county councils in Wales was due simply to their feeling that the thing was not just, and that in the districts where the majority of the population were Nonconformists they had not had fair play. The county councils, and the Welsh county councils especially, deserved consideration from the House in this matter. Great obligations had been placed upon them. The larger the duties laid upon the local authorities the greater was the consideration with which they must be treated. They could not lay great duties upon them and treat them as indentured labourers bound to take orders without any say in the matter. The county councils in Wales were not backward about education. They were not unprogressive, but they, as he understood, had stated that in the present state of feeling, with the limited powers given them by this Act, they had difficulty in the discharge of the obligations laid upon them. There was a time when this the House of Commons used to refuse supplies. Those were times to which hon. Members could look back with credit. The House of Commons was told in those days that it was lacking in public spirit, and that the country was suffering. Its answer always was that its grievances must be redressed. No doubt it might be said perfectly truly that the county councils were local, statutory, and subordinate authorities, but they would not dispose of this difficulty by taking narrow technical points. They would not dispose of it by narrow legal points, or the narrow application of abstract logic. They would have to recognise that, if they laid upon the county councils these great duties, they would have to have their say as to the powers necessary to entrust them with, in order to enable them to carry out their obligations. It was not the backward county councils that were making the difficulty. It was the most progressive county councils. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education said that in Wales they were not giving the Act a fair trial. Was the Act giving the county councils a fair trial? The progressive county councils were the local authorities which would have been most ready, sympathetic, and keen in working the Education Act, but these were the ones with whom most difficulty was found. The hon. Gentleman would have to realise that this feeling was genuine. He was convinced that until the matter was taken up in a broad spirit which would get rid of the dual system, they would have in education neither peace nor progress.

*SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford) said that the hon. and learned Member for Carnarvon, after all his declamation, had scarcely produced two instances in Wales showing solid grievance in regard to the working of the Act. The hon. Member had referred to isolated cases in Wales where there had been special difficulties in connection with the schools. These were invariably cases which had rightly been brought under the notice of the Department, but no one of these cases had been dealt with under the clauses of the Act. They were all as it were *sub judice*, and had not yet been dealt with by the Board of Education. He was not going to dwell on this question as it affected Wales. He admitted that there was a great distinction between the Principality and England with regard to the working of this Act. He wished to be fair and just. One or two cases which the hon. and learned Gentleman quoted did show a certain inequality and injustice which might be remedied. They did occur in out of the way places, but he did not believe that many of them could be cited. So far as he was concerned, he would be one of the first to accept some possible Amendment which would enable the Board of Education to deal with such cases in an equitable manner. In Wales there were Radical county councils, but the position was very different in England. There were a large number of counties in England where the county councils were essentially Tory in their character. It seemed to him that the hon. and learned Gentleman ought to be a little more patient with regard to the campaign against the Act. He ought to have tested the Act and given it a chance before attacking its provisions in the way he had done.

He, himself, would give the House his opinion of the working of the Act in Kent, where the Nonconformists would be more likely to have a rough time if it were not working fairly. Having given nine months close attention to its working he said advisedly that he had never known so much gross misrepresentation and calumny sown broadcast with regard to any Act of Parliament as there had been with regard to this Education Act. He knew that the word calumny just now was supposed to be a very ugly word, but if one half the calumny had been used against the character of any hon. Member as there had been against this Act, he would have been able to recover very substantial damages. He held in his hand a leaflet which denounced the Act as one for handing over the School Boards to the Romanistic clergy of this country. The changes made by the Act in regard to the position of the Nonconformists were, in his opinion, changes in favour of Nonconformity, and not of the Church. It is true that the difficulties surrounding the question had clogged the way of education to a very great extent. These difficulties met Mr. Forster in 1870, and prevented all succeeding Governments from touching the question of higher and secondary education until this Government had the courage to face the situation. This Government had the same dilemma to meet, but they successfully encountered it, by founding a compromise on the top of the earlier compromise. What was that compromise? It was to ask those who possessed the buildings of the voluntary schools, and to whom the value of the site also appertained, to hand over these to the nation if a portion of the rates were assigned to them. Of course, in addition to that, there was the alteration by the introduction of the outside management. A fairer or more just compromise was never offered. The great controversy between the two sides of the House had been in regard to control; but he said advisedly, after nine months experience of the working of the Act in his own county, that before another year was over, all the old parson-controlled schools would have disappeared. The introduction of one-third of the representatives outside the trustees into the management of these schools had thrown all the inner working of the schools open to the public and made it public property. It enabled daily and even hourly tests to be applied to the working of the conscience clause in everything appertaining to the Church schools; and now there was no grievance for which there was not an immediate remedy. If any wrong whatever was being done, there was a court of appeal in the educational committee of the county or borough council. One thing he had discovered was that if there was one difficulty greater than another it was to give the managers of those schools something to do. The result was that the representative body was practically the managers of the schools. There was not a single complaint made by any Nonconformist parent connected with any Church school in his county brought before him which he was not prepared to deal with at once and to rectify to the full. And yet they were told that this was an Act to hand over the schools to the power of the priest. A more unfounded statement was never made.

A grievance much touched on was a very just one—that of the treatment of the pupil teachers. They all knew that for a vast number of years it was not possible for Church schools to have Nonconformist pupil teachers. But no test was now to be applied either to pupil teachers or assistants; and under the Cowper-Temple Clause, Nonconformist students could now enter pupil-teacher centres, training colleges, and hostels without any test whatever. That was a very serious change in favour of Nonconformists. He was prepared to admit that there was one grievance remaining, and that was that Nonconformists could not become headmasters of certain schools, but that was part of the compromise to which he had alluded, and it was on that compromise that the buildings and leases had been handed over to the nation for public purposes. He was bound to say that except for that bar, the highest posts in the teaching profession were practically about as open to Nonconformists as to Churchmen; and before long there would be openings for the children of Nonconformists in the secondary schools and all the other branches of the teaching profession generally. He welcomed some of the remarks from the hon. Baronet the Member for Berwick, who suggested a possible Amendment to brush away once for all these difficulties. Hon. Members opposite knew that his views in regard to these matters were not illiberal. He had always looked at this question from an educational point of view; but in common fairness and justice they should admit that the Church of England first of all introduced the great question of education, and occupied the ground to an enormous extent when first the education of the children of England was seriously grappled with. The Church of England was there to-day, and it was because she was there to-day that he wished to separate education from mere denominational squabbles. He, for one, would therefore welcome any compromise by which they would secure that every parent could have the particular religious education which he, or she, wished for his, or her, children absolutely given in the schools.

The hon. Baronet the Member for Berwick suggested that this was a question of money, and with that he agreed. The hon. Baronet suggested that religious education should not be given in school hours, but that the schools should be open for it an hour earlier; but he believed that that system would break down because of the difficulties concerning the attendance so early, of the children whose parents wanted them to earn a little money. The difficulty might be solved by the State stepping in and, for the sake of peace, giving a grant of so much a year for the purpose of religious education. Rather than that there should be no settlement of this vexed question, he would hand over that money to all denominations alike for religious education. He believed that no money of the State would ever be spent to better purpose. These were questions on which he felt very deeply. He did not and he could not believe in the evil prophesies concerning the working of the Act in which some hon. Members opposite indulged. He believed in the local authorities; that they were practical business men who would look at these difficult problems purely and simply from an educational point of view, and he was certain that they would not lean either to the advantage of Church or Dissent to the injustice of either. And so far as those with whom he was associated in his own county were concerned, though there was a preponderance of Churchmen on the committee, every possible injustice and grievance of Nonconformists which came before the committee would be remedied. And of this he was certain, that all the extraordinarily exaggerated statements made concerning the Act would vanish into thin air, and that the Act would be worked wisely and well in the future.

MR. ABEL THOMAS (Carmarthenshire, E.) said he was not one of those who did not want the local authorities to carry out the Act. It was perfectly true that when the Act was under discussion he thought the School Board system was the best; but he had changed his opinion and he believed now that the present was the best. They had been told that the Act was a compromise. He repudiated that. The Act was thrust down the throats of Members on his side of the House, and to talk of it as a compromise was ridiculous. The hon. Baronet the Member for Dartford said that the Act was a good Act so far as it went; that it was good for England.

* **SIR W. HART DYKE** said he acknowledged there were great difficulties in Wales.

MR. ABEL THOMAS said that no Act of Parliament which was good for one part of the country and impossible for another part could be a good Act in itself. It had been said that the hon. Member for Carnarvon had started this agitation in Wales. With all his admiration for the hon. Gentleman he did not think that he would claim that he had started the agitation. He could not imagine that hon. Members opposite who made that statement really appreciated the position. After all, would hon. Gentlemen opposite put themselves in the position of the people in Wales? He ventured to say that there was not a voluntary school in Wales in which every two out of three boys and girls were not the children of Nonconformist parents. Out of those sixty schools there was not a single one in which the majority of the children were not children of Nonconformist parents. Imagine the position reversed, and instead of the Church people having the majority of the management of these schools that four Baptists had the management, and only a Baptist was able to become headmaster. Under such circumstances there was one noble Lord opposite who would be a passive resister, and he would give the Bishops the credit for being passive resisters, and their Party would be ashamed of them if they were not. The position was the same throughout Wales. The majority of the children in 99 out of 100 of the voluntary schools were Nonconformists. In more than half they were two to one and in the remainder they were five to one. The parents sent their children to these schools with the knowledge that four out of the six managers were certain to be Church people, and that the headmaster and head mistress were Church people. It was nonsense to say there was no Church of England atmosphere in such a school. The Government must face the difficulty that many had become passive resisters honestly, truthfully, and concientiously.

What was the position? The Government was paying the whole cost of carrying on the schools, the buildings had to a large extent been supplied by Church people, but they had had the use of them for thirty years, and it must be remembered many of them were built to prevent a Board school coming into the place after the passing of the Act of 1870. Were the children to be impressed and stamped with Church doctrine for all time? Under these circumstances he thought the county councils were justified in the action they had taken when they found that the vast majority of their constituents were in favour of their not carrying out this Act. Assuming a *mandamus* was applied for what was to be the result? Were they to be fined or sent to gaol? Let the Committee imagine what the result would be in that case. The position was ridiculous. If the new members who had undertaken to carry out the Act in the way suggested, attended any of the meetings of the council and the other members withdrew, there would not be a quorum to carry out any business and this Act could not be carried out; was everybody in Wales and Monmouth to be sent to goal? Was the whole country to be fined? Would it not under the circumstances be best for the Government to admit that they had passed an unworkable Act, and one that could not be carried out so far as the management was concerned. And inasmuch as they would never get the people of Wales to assent to the proposition that all who were appointed to headmasterships should be Church of England people, would it not be better to face the position at once than to have an inquiry to find out whether or not the late county councils had committed a breach of the Act. If that were done and new county councils elected, their majorities would be even greater than before. The hon. Member had spoken about Christian truthfulness and Christian charity, could not Christian truthfulness and charity be obtained from the Church side? Was it Christian truthfulness and charity to build denominational schools and compel the people of the neighbourhood to send their children to these schools, which were Church schools in every sense of the word? Let hon. Members put themselves in the position of the Nonconformists, and see how they would feel in that position. He ventured to assert that if they did, the Act would be impossible in Wales in a very short time. If the Government knew the feeling in Wales in reference to this Act he did not believe they would ever force it down the throats of the Welsh people. He ventured to say five out of six Welsh people were prepared to go through a considerable amount of martyrdom, not because of what their Parliamentary representatives told them, but because of what they thought and spoke of among themselves.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said this reduction had been moved by the hon. Member for Carnarvon in order to censure the Board of Education for their administration of the Act. Some of the grievances brought forward by the hon. Member appeared to be in course of consideration by the Board. One or two of them, as he understood, had already been dealt with and mitigated. Therefore, so far as the question of the reduction of the Vote and the grievances brought forward were concerned, he thought there was nothing more to be said. But his hon. friend in his turn had made a very grave charge against the local authorities in Wales. He had himself always maintained that the great principle of this Education Act was not the Church clauses, as they had been called, but the devolution on the local authority of all educational powers and responsibility, and he did not think if the Liberal Party came into power to-morrow they would alter the principle of the Act. In future the whole responsibility for the organisation and administration of education would rest with the local authorities; and the charge which the Secretary to the Board of Education was bringing against the Welsh local authorities was that they were now refusing to administer this statute law, and were by their attitude making it impossible for the Act to be carried out. This attitude was assumed by the Welsh people not because they were opposed to the local administration, because there was no part of the United Kingdom where local responsibility was more welcomed than in Wales. When the first Education Bill was presented its warmest supporters were the Welsh Members. Therefore it was not the fundamental idea of the Education Act which caused this hostility on the part of the Welsh county councils, but a desire to procure the amendment of certain parts of the Act.

Whether it was right or wrong to attempt to force the House of Commons to amend in certain directions the Act of 1902 he would not discuss, but the attempt would be much more likely to secure his sympathy if the sufferers from the attempt were not the unhappy children in the schools. He put it to the Welsh Members, was it right to attempt to procure the amendment of an Act of Parliament by putting this stress and strain upon the children attending the schools in Wales? Under the law of the land it was the duty of the Welsh county councils to provide for and supervise the secular instruction in the voluntary schools which they now refused to touch. The fact that in those schools, although the instruction given was according to the formularies and doctrines of the Church of England, the greater proportion of the children were Nonconformist, well deserved the attention of the House, and if any amendment of the law could be introduced by which that grievance could be alleviated, it was one the House must properly consider. But if the children were Nonconformist, there was the conscience clause of which they could take advantage. The religious instruction even in Church schools was to a very small extent denominational, and in few schools was denominational instruction given on more than one day in the week. There was nothing whatever to prevent the parents withdrawing their children while anything in the shape of denominational instruction was being given. But the children in these schools were entitled to have their secular instruction cared for by the county council, and it was not right that they should be deprived of the advantages of warmth, light, and proper apparatus, which Parliament had conferred upon them by this Act. That consideration caused him entirely to disapprove of the particular method by which the Welsh county councils were attempting to secure the amendment of the Act. He respected their conscientious scruples, but he thought they were wrong in adopting a procedure by which injury was inflicted upon the totally innocent children. When Vice-President of the Council he avoided as much as possible discussing the religious question because, while he did not think it caused any real difficulty in the schools, it had recently caused great difficulty in the administration of the Act.

In dealing with the religious question three courses were open to Parliament. The first was to restrict the operations of the State to secular instruction. Such a course, for which much might be said, had been adopted in many of the Colonies and almost universally in America, and experience had not shown that it led to a very irreligious character on the part of the population. It certainly developed the Sunday school, making that institution a much more real thing, and many of the American States bore evidence to the fact that a religious and pious population could grow up under such a system. But the people of this country were not prepared to adopt that system; certainly public opinion was not ripe for it at present, and it must be put aside as not being practical politics. The second course, tried to some extent in the Act of 1870, was to invent a form of religious teaching on which everybody agreed. He knew of no religious instruction which came as near to that definition as the instruction given under the London School Board. That instruction was admirable, as far as it went; it was based on the Bible; it dealt with simple portions which the children could understand; and, as a preparation for further instruction in more advanced theology, or more advanced dogmatic religion, it could not be surpassed. But there again the great objection was that the people were not content with it.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): Who are not content with it?

Sir JOHN GORST said the Roman Catholics, the Jews, and a large proportion of Church of England people were not content with it. To force children of these people to receive undenominational teaching against the will of the parents was a matter of oppression. The third course was to provide frankly denominational teaching. It was because there had been such teaching ever since the Act of 1870 that that measure had worked as well as it had. The children were able to go to Church of England, Wesleyan, Roman Catholic, or Jewish schools, and get the particular kind of instruction desired by their parents. He admitted that in many places there was no choice, and it was in those places the agitation arose which culminated in the Act of 1902. He had always thought that the religious difficulty could be solved in the simplest possible way. Why should it not be made a part of the duty of the managers to see that as far as practicable all the children received such religious instruction as was acceptable to their parents? That would be just and fair all round. That was not a mere theatrical suggestion; it had been carried out in hundreds of schools for the last thirty or forty years. In many schools, theoretically Church schools, there were committees on which Nonconformists had representation; on most days of the week religious instruction applicable to all the children was given, and on one day in the week separate religious teaching to the Nonconformist, and the catechism, or other forms of Anglican teaching, to the Church children was given. Why could not the whole of this difficulty be settled in that way?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE asked what the right hon. Gentleman would do when there were half-a-dozen sections.

Sir JOHN GORST said there were not half-a-dozen sections who could not agree upon a common form of religious teaching. At the outside there would not be more than two or three different sections to provide for. That seemed to him the only solution possible, and if it were carried out fairly—as he was sure it would be under the county councils—he believed the religious difficulty would cease to exist. He earnestly pleaded with the Welsh people that, in the meantime, until an amendment of the present arrangements could be procured, they should not let the poor little children suffer, but come to some *modus vivendi* with the Church and the Board of Education. [Mr. Lloyd-George: Hear, hear!] He congratulated the hon. Member on his attempts to bring about such an arrangement; he had nothing but praise for his action; but would not the hon. Member, joined by his friends, renew those efforts, and see whether, in conjunction with the Board of Education, a *modus vivendi* for the next year or two could be arrived at, so that the schools would be taken over by the county councils, the secular instruction in Wales kept up to a proper standard, and these children saved from the deprivation of education, warmth, apparatus, and so forth, which appeared to be the result of the present deadlock.

*Dr. MACNAMARA said the last speaker had left the matter in a far more hopeful condition than had the speech of his successor at the Board of Education. His scheme would be workable given two previous conditions. In the first place, they must have absolute public control over education, and, in the second place, the teachers must be entirely the servants of the public authority. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University would agree with him in that. If they could have those two points conceded then they could see their way out of the difficulty. With regard to the speech of the Parliamentary Secretary, he persisted in stating that the Act of 1902 was a compromise, and he had complained of serious misrepresentations of that Act. The most serious misrepresentation he (Dr. Macnamara) had heard was to call the Act a compromise, because that was exactly what it was not. The Act of 1902 repealed the whole legislation of thirty-one years, and one-third of the Act was closured, and the situation afterwards worsened in another place. He did not know how an Act like that could be called a compromise. The Act of 1870 was a real compromise, for Mr. Gladstone and Mr.

Forster were continually receiving and accepting suggestions from the Conservative side, and as much of that Act belonged to the Conservatives as to the Liberals. That was a compromise, but how many opportunities did they, the Liberals, get of introducing any workable alterations in the Act of 1902? The Parliamentary Secretary said he did not understand their position on the question of religious instruction, but all they desired was to secure religious liberty. He said they had now to choose between universal denominationalism and universal secularism. The choice was not between these two. If they were driven back to secularism in their schools it would be because of the bickerings of sectarian bodies, and he personally should deplore that. The choice was along the lines so ably set forth by the hon. Member for Carnarvon and the Member for Cambridge University, namely, the St. Asaph compromise. That system consisted of undenominational instruction with Biblical instruction, along the lines of the London School Board system. [AN HON. MEMBER: That was outside the time-table.] No, it was not outside the time-table. There were certain hours during which the children came to school, and it was no use fixing the religious education outside those hours. It was no use offering the Church of England facilities for religious teaching at hours at which the children would not come. What the Bishop of St. Asaph and those who acted with him agreed to, was that on the days upon which specific denominational teaching was to be given the time-table hours should be altered from 9.30 or later, so that the children might attend in ordinary hours and come to school as they did under ordinary circumstances, but State compulsion was to begin at the later time. That was not outside the ordinary school hours, but it was agreed that if these special facilities were given they should be paid for by the denomination themselves. He deplored very much the breakdown of the St. Asaph compromise, but they could not blame Nonconformists for it. They must blame the stupidity of one or two Church dignitaries in Wales. Another effort was made by the Rev. Canon Eade and Mr. Samuel Storey in the county of Durham, and they went further than the Bishop of St. Asaph. Did hon. Members think that the Durham proposal, which would have settled the difficulty all over the country, was not a fair and reasonable one? The Durham proposal was put forward as an experiment, and it met the difficulties in the fairest way, for it gave preferential treatment to the managers of non-provided schools. It laid down that the county council should appoint the teachers on the recommendations of the managers of the school, Non-provided schools were to be leased for a period and even the State teacher might, for a consideration, become the denominational volunteer. That meant that the Nonconformists of Durham were prepared to go a very long way to meet the difficulties, and he deplored the lack of foresight and statesmanship shown by the leaders of the Church of England, one or two of whom opposed the whole scheme and thus brought about this bitter struggle He thought that half-a-dozen men chosen from both sides of the House could settle the matter in a very short time. If they were to lock up the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich with his hon. friend the Member for Carnarvon and say that they should not come out until a settlement was effected, he really believed they would arrive at a settlement. He had grave doubts as to which would come out alive; but there would be a settlement all the same. He deplored the stupidity of those who had caused these struggles, which a little generosity and liberal-mindedness on both sides could have avoided.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said he understood that the matter before the Committee was a proposal to reduce the Vote, on the ground of the maladministration of the Board of Education. In all matters of concordat the Board of Education, so far as it had any powers in the matter, had done its best to stimulate any proposals made to it. Therefore, what the hon. Member was saying did not apply to the Board of Education.

*DR. MACNAMARA said he had been very careful to limit his remarks to one or two dignitaries of the Church of England, and not to the Board of Education.

He came now to a matter of pure administration. To-day he asked a Question with regard to the London education scheme, and he understood that it would be discourteous to the Council to reply to his Question at the present time. He understood the sanction of the Board of Education to the London County Council scheme was on its way, but the Parliamentary Secretary did not want to say so at the present time. They could not expect consistency from Governments, but they did expect it from Government Departments. He thought the London scheme was hopelessly inadequate. There were to be thirty-eight members of the London County Council, and five women to be co-opted under the London scheme. Section 17 of the Act laid it down that representatives of other bodies and persons of experience in education acquainted with the needs of the various kinds of schools in the area, might be appointed. In the early days of the Act the Board of Education laid the greatest stress upon that provision, and at Loughborough and Bridgwater they rejected schemes because they did not include representatives of the outside area and persons of a more wide and varied experience in education. The Board of Education had been sending back schemes all over the country on these grounds, and he asked for a little consistency in dealing with big and little authorities. On the 5th of November, 1902, the hon. Baronet said county councils were not elected specially for educational matters and some of them might not be the best for education, and it was therefore desirable that the local authorities should be assisted by persons acquainted with the work and that it should be incumbent upon them to appoint a committee. The Board of Education had been fighting Cardiff, Swansea, and Newport ever since they submitted their schemes, although they were similar to that of the London County Council. He protested very vigorously against that kind of treatment in the case of these Welsh boroughs. The scheme of the London County Council did not satisfy Section 17 of the Act. When the Committee were discussing the Estimates on 9th July 1903, the hon. Gentleman explained what these schemes would have to contain. The hon. Gentleman said then that he was prepared to stand by the declarations which had been made, and to insist that these provisions should be met in the schemes, and he had been insisting ever since until he came to deal with the London County Council. He thought it was discreditable that a great Department of the Government should worry these little towns to meet their desires in the matter of their schemes, and that it should be afraid to tell the London County Council that their scheme did not satisfy the requirements. His Welsh colleagues had been taunted with having defied the law. He thought that men who defied the law showed a good deal more respect for it than those who made it farcical, which was what the Board of Education had done.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs) said the Act of 1902 had certain features regarding which he desired to offer a few observations. The first of these features was that the School Boards should be abolished throughout the country; the second was the endeavour to make provision for the more efficient teaching in the schools in which a majority of the children of this country had to receive their education; and the third was the substitution of the county council for the School Board as the education authority. The Committee must have listened with the greatest possible interest to what was said by his hon. and learned friend the Member for East Carmarthen. The hon. Member was formerly opposed to the county councils having charge of education, but he now stated that he was convinced that he had been wrong, and that the county councils were the better authority. When the Bill was passing through the House they were told from time to time that the proper body to take charge of education was an *ad hoc* authority.

*DR. MACNAMARA: You will have that in Scotland.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY said he supposed that what was said by the hon. Member for East Carmarthenshire might be taken as a sort of epitaph on all those prophecies.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: All the Welsh Members, with one exception, voted for control by the county council at that time.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY said he was very glad to hear that, and it confirmed what he was saying, that there was a large body of opinion in favour of the Government proposal for the substitution of the county councils for the School Boards. The second feature which the Act of 1902 dealt with was this. A considerable majority of the children of the country were then in what were called voluntary schools. These schools were not, in many cases, as efficient as they ought to have been. They were not efficient for the best of all reasons—that was, the want of means to bring the education up to the level of that given in the best Board schools, and in addition to that there were complaints that these schools were very much under clerical control. He could not help feeling that the second complaint was one unduly exaggerated. The existence of abuses arising from clerical control were few and far between. The influence of the clergy on education had been for the advantage of the country. Hon. Members seemed to be altogether oblivious to the services rendered to education in this country by the clergy of the Church of England at a time when the State did little or nothing for education. When no one else would take it up, it was taken up by the clergy, and carried to a considerable point by them. A vast number of the children attending the voluntary schools which he had described were Nonconformists. How was their grievance to be redressed? He was one of those who believed that it was the right of every child to have as good an education as could be secured for it. He believed that in the matter of education a good healthy element of lay control was a desirable element.

Was there any alternative proposal before the country when the Act was passed? Nothing whatever. If it might be called an alternative policy the idea which seemed to be at the back of some of the opposition to the Government measure was that the voluntary schools should gradually be allowed to bleed to death until they were unable to compete with the Board schools, so that when in the course of time they would cease to exist they would be universally supplanted by a system of Board schools all over the country. There were many objections, to which he was not going to refer, to that proposal, but what he did ask the House was this—What was to become of the children in the meantime while that process was going on? He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University was quite right when he called the attention of the Committee to the fact that, in a debate in regard to the administration of the Education Act, the first thing to be considered was the interest of the children. The schools attended by a large majority of the children of the country being admittedly inefficient, were they going to continue that state of things indefinitely until one by one they had disappeared, and until in the course of a generation, after any amount of friction had been gone through, they should find them supplanted by a universal network of Board schools all over the country? He ventured to say that that was an impossible proposal in the interest of fair dealing towards those schools. The Act had remedied those evils which existed before it was passed. Wherever the Act was fairly administered the non-provided schools would now be on the same level of efficiency with the very best provided schools; and the result was that, whereas the majority of the children had formerly to put up with an education not so good as that at the service of the minority, every child would now have the best education which could be provided. The alleged grievance of too much clerical control in the voluntary schools had no foundation whatever in fact, while so far as the grievances of Nonconformist teachers were concerned the Act was a great step in advance [An HON. MEMBER: No.]—well, a step in advance.

He dissented altogether from the doctrine that the State should adopt the system of secular teaching, and hoped the day would never come when such a system would be introduced into the schools. Whatever might be said of the abstract merits of such a system the people of this country would have none of it. It was absolutely outside the range of practical politics. From every point of view it was extremely undesirable, and for this reason—that there were a great many children who would receive no religious instruction if it did not form part of the teaching in the elementary schools. But, was it impossible that there should be something of an agreement among the great bodies which represented religion in this country? Of course, the case of the Roman Catholics must be dealt with separately; but was it not possible that, among the other bodies which held so much in common, there might be an agreement as to what was suitable religious teaching for children? The hon. Member for Carnarvonshire, when something of that kind was suggested by the right hon. Member for Cambridge University, said, "How is that possible where you have six sects to deal with?" But surely these six sects were not at variance on the subject as to what was suitable religious teaching? Or, if they were, it was a scandal to their common Christianity. Speaking for himself, he could most devoutly have wished that some such compromise as that associated with the Bishop of St. Asaph could have been arrived at. He understood it was that religious teaching such as was provided for under the London School Board syllabus should be given, supplemented by such denominational teaching as was desired by the parents of the children. If he was correctly informed, the hon. Member for Carnarvon was very largely responsible for the miscarriage of that proposal, because that hon. Gentleman insisted that denominational education should not be given in school hours. It was no use providing denominational education unless it was allowed to be given in school hours, for in a great many cases the children would not otherwise be got to attend.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said that if that were the reason the compromise was refused, that reason was not assigned by the clergy at the time. On the contrary, all the conditions laid down by the clergy in regard to religious education were agreed to in the most unqualified terms.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY said he was not familiar with the details of what had passed, but he gathered that he was right when he stated that the hon. Gentleman had insisted that the denominational teaching should not be in school hours. To his mind denominational teaching, to be a reality, must be given in school hours, because, if given out of school hours the temptation would be very strong on the parents to employ their children in these hours for the profit of the family, or in amusing themselves, instead of attending to the religious instruction provided for them. He desired, in conclusion, to emphasise the appeal made to consider the interests of the children in Wales on this subject. Was it not too bad that, while this dispute was raging, the children should be left without proper fires, proper books, and the best teaching? The children were far too valuable to be mere counters in the game of political or ecclesiastical controversy. He hoped that the Committee would recognise that the Act of 1902 was an honest effort, in the interests of the children, to promote thoroughly good and efficient education, and that that Act had been well and honestly administered by the Department in charge of it.

*SIR MICHAEL FOSTER (London University) said he wished to say a few words to express his sympathy with the proposition of the hon. Member for Carnarvon in so far as this meant that the Act of 1902 should be amended. He felt the more justified in saying that, because he had always from the beginning expressed his opinion that the Act had within it many admirable provisions for the improvement of the general education of the people. He did not wonder that it had excited an interest in education, and had promoted education throughout the country to a very remarkable extent. But the Bill even as presented and still more when it left the House as an Act contained within itself, in his opinion, certain evils. One evil was that, for the first time, teachers paid by the State were called upon to declare their religion. But an even greater evil than that was that, so it seemed to him, the Act contained the possibility of stirring up religious strife throughout the country, and so interfering with the interests of the education of the children. When he looked back on the history of the past two years, he must confess that it had raised up strife.

Admirably as it had been carried out in the case of his right hon. friend the Member for Dartford, the very complaint of the right hon. Baronet proved that it had created religious controversy. The number of passive resisters showed how a real element of religious strife had been stirred up by the Act. His political conscience was stronger than his religious conscience, at least to this extent, that he was willing to accept the little wrong which might be done by the Act in order to secure its greater benefits. But his religious conscience was strong enough to make him appreciate the working of the conscience of those in all conditions of life, following all manner of occupations, in every variety of circumstances, who had been led by their consciences to do that which they had never done before, and what they trusted they would never do again, resist the law; and it was in order that that religious strife should as soon as possible be brought to an end that he wished to see the Act amended. From what he had heard that day, he had greater hope than he had two years ago that the real solution of the problem, that which was contained in the suggestion of his right hon. friend the Member for Cambridge University—a solution, however, which had formerly been rejected—would be in the end accepted. That solution lay in this, that the State, since it could only well and truly handle those things about which it was not bitterly and widely divided, and since it was bitterly and largely divided about religious instruction could not handle that, but could well and truly offer teaching which included the teaching of right and wrong, and man's duty to his neighbour. Looking round, it seemed to him that there was a growing public opinion in favour of what had been suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Haddingtonshire and supported by the right hon. Baronet from the Front Bench. He did not like to use the phrase secular teaching, because secular teaching seemed to connote the idea of teaching which did not help in the formation of character or of moral well-being. Moral teaching did not depend on any one religious opinion; it was the basis and the product of all religions. The solution towards which public sentiment seemed to be tending, although some hon. Members said that it was not within practical politics, was that the State should confine itself to, and pay for, that teaching which was the basis of every religion and allow each denomination to come in and teach its own particular tenets at its own cost. If the person who carried out the denominational teaching was a teacher in the school, so much the better, for it would have a greater effect upon the children. Depend upon it, that was the only real solution of the education problem; it was a solution which must come sooner or later, and the sooner it came the better.

*Mr. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said the House would congratulate itself on the very fair spirit of compromise which appeared to prevail on all sides. There was an evident desire shown by hon. Members in all parts that this present strife, this religious bitterness, this sectarian spirit which appeared to have done so much harm to the cause of education, should, if possible, be brought to an end. He claimed for himself that during the discussion on the Act of 1902, he always held that some compromise, rather different to that decided upon, should have been arrived at to remove the grievances, real or imaginary, of people who did not see eye to eye with Churchmen in this question. He believed most hon. Members were anxious to bring about this result. But surely there was one condition that ought to precede any alteration of the law, and this was that the law as it at present stood ought to be administered. He was emphatically for a compromise; but he did say it was the plain duty of the Government and of public authorities like the county councils to administer the Act as a condition precedent to any alteration of the law. What was the position of affairs now? The Motion brought forward at the instance of the hon. Member for Carnarvon represented the case of the Welsh county councils, but he contended that the Welsh county councils' refusal to administer the Act had involved enormous hardships on the children of Wales. Whether the Act was suitable for Wales or not, their first duty was to administer it. But what were the special grievances brought forward by the hon. Member for Carnarvon? When they considered what he said, they amounted to a very little—viz., that certain draft Orders had been issued which inflicted a hardship in cases where Nonconformists had subscribed, along with Churchmen, to the building of certain schools. But these were only draft Orders; they had not yet the force of law; the Board of Education was considering them; they were not in operation, and, therefore, the grievance brought forward was an exceedingly small one, and one which did not justify the action of the county councils in refusing to administer the Act altogether. The hon. Member for Carnarvon gave a long list of grievances in connection with Wales, and he did not deny that there might be grievances; but the hon. Member went on to tell them that the county councils wished to act in the broadest spirit and that they were acting in a spirit of religious equality. What, however, was the state of affairs in one of the boroughs which the hon. Member himself represented? Were they exhibiting an example of the spirit of religious equality in the borough of Pwllheli? There were two schools, a national school and a Board school. In connection with the Board school all the teachers and all the officials were Nonconformist, though Church people paid at least half of the rates.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: But what about the Church school in the same place?

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said he would come to that presently. In the Board school the headmaster of the boys' section, the headmistress of the girls' department, the county clerk of education, the attendance officer, the assistant teachers, the pupil teachers, and the school cleaner, all were Calvinistic Methodists. This was the spirit of religious equality in which hon. Members opposite acted when they got a majority in the council. In the case of the Church school there were no less than three pupil teachers who were Nonconformists; and he ventured to say that the spirit of religious equality was much more manifest in the persecuted Church school than in the schools conducted as hon. Members opposite would desire to see them. When the Act came into force the local authority for that district was careful to appoint six managers to the Board school, every one of whom was a Nonconformist, and the majority of whom were Calvinistic Methodists. He had put this case forward to show there were grievances on both sides. He fully admitted there were difficulties in Wales. There was, he granted, a Nonconformist majority there, and where there was only one school and that Church of England, even with the conscience clause, there was, he admitted, the appearance of a grievance. But what ought to be done. The hon. Member had spoken about the Bishop of St. Asaph's compromise. He knew a good deal about that compromise. For his part he supported a compromise on those lines, but what was the real reason why it broke down? It was that under the existing state of the law no compromise would have been valid and might have been repudiated afterwards.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomeryshire): You could not trust our word.

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN: That is not quite fair. It is not a case of trusting an individual's word. You have to trust an elective body. Under the compromise the Church would have handed over her schools, a new council might have been elected, and there could have been no charge of bad faith against these successors. No public authority can bind its successors, and they might have gone back from what was a purely private arrangement, and then the Church would have been in the position of having parted with her schools and of having no possible means of getting them back.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN: There was to have been a short period at the termination of which, if they had found that the compromise did not work, they would have got their schools back.

*MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said that under the compromise the Church would have handed the schools over.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN: Yes, for three years.

***MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN**: But you cannot make them provide schools for three years. Where is the power in the Act to do it? If there was a power to lease the schools temporarily, I agree, but the leaders of the Church were advised that it could not be done, and that they ran the risk of losing their schools altogether. The general opinion was that in the case of schools provided by Church people for Church objects they had no right to run that risk, and, therefore, in the present state of the law, even if the compromise were desirable, they could not to do it. Continuing, the hon. Member said they knew that a spirit of compromise was in the air, and he looked forward to some new Education Bill which might relieve their difficulties. He did not think they had quite arrived at that compromise yet. For his part he would never accept any compromise unless definite denominational teaching were given in school hours and not out of school hours; but they were going on lines which he hoped would lead to some such arrangement; and by degrees they might understand each other better. He appealed to hon. Members opposite — granting that compromise might come—whether it was not their duty to administer the law while it lasted. He was not referring to passive resisters. An individual might like to break the law, though, in his opinion, they did so largely for political reasons, but they were not concerned with individuals. It was a far more serious thing for great local authorities to deliberately set their faces against carrying out the law, or, at all events, to say they would not carry out the law except under conditions not within and never contemplated by the Act. It was their duty to see that the law was carried out, and, while this was being done, they might endeavour to come to some better system. He would support any compromise which met the religious difficulties of others without placing disabilities upon any other sect or community.

MR. HUMPHREYS OWEN expressed the opinion that what was now being fought was the claim of the clergy to control elementary education, thus continuing the controversy which was begun with the Act of Uniformity. Education had so long been the monopoly of the Church of England that she was naturally reluctant to give up control, but she must now realise that the time had come when the control must be relinquished. The clergy regarded the denominational schools as their own private property, but that was an entire mistake; they were merely trustees. They held the schools for the purpose of giving education, and education was now a public trust, and if Parliament had the power to direct what should be done with public trust property, the trustees were under no obligation any longer to regard their responsibilities under the trust deed, and the handing over of the schools to the public authority was nothing more than the execution of their duty. He would be no party to any compromise upon the subject of public control, and on the subject of religious tests the Nonconformists could not give way. The imposition of religious tests either engendered and encouraged hypocrisy or tended to drive out of the teaching profession those best fitted for it. He was opposed to the counsel of despair which counselled either strict denominationalism or purely secular teaching. He could not regard the teaching of religious facts as they presented themselves in the New Testament as denominational teaching.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY [3RD ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1904–5. (VOTE ON ACCOUNT).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £21,500,000, be granted to His Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charges for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905, viz. —

CIVIL SERVICES.

Class IV.

	£
Board of Education	7,000,000

Class I.

	£
Royal Palaces and Marlborough House	26,000
Osborne	10,000
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens	35,000
Houses of Parliament Buildings	16,000
Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain	30,000
Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain	15,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings	20,000
Revenue Buildings	160,000
Public Buildings, Great Britain	160,000
Surveys of the United Kingdom	90,000
Harbours under the Board of Trade	10,000
Peterhead Harbour	10,000
Rates on Government Property	260,000
Public Works and Buildings, Ireland	110,000
Railways, Ireland	60,000

Class II.

United Kingdom and England :—

	£
House of Lords Offices	6,000
House of Commons Offices	12,000
Treasury and Subordinate Departments	40,000
Home Office	60,000
Foreign Office	30,000
Colonial Office	25,000
Privy Council Office, etc.	4,000
Board of Trade	75,000
Mercantile Marine Services	30,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade	3
Board of Agriculture	65,000
Charity Commission	15,000
Civil Service Commission	18,000
Exchequer and Audit Department	25,000
Friendly Societies Registry	3,000
Local Government Board	85,000
Lunacy Commission	5,000
Mint (including Coinage)	5
National Debt Office	6,000
Public Record Office	10,000
Public Works Loan Commission	5
Registrar General's Office	18,000
Stationery and Printing	340,000
Woods, Forests, etc., Office of	8,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	30,000
Secret Service	40,000

Scotland :—

Secretary for Scotland	25,000
Fishery Board	8,000
Lunacy Commission	3,000
Registrar General's Office	2,000
Local Government Board	5,000

Ireland :—

Lord-Lieutenant's Household	2,000
Chief Secretary for Ireland	12,000
Department of Agriculture	80,000
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	1,000
Local Government Board	25,000
Public Record Office	2,000
Public Works Office	18,000
Registrar General's Office	6,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey	7,000

Class III.

United Kingdom and England :—

	£
Law Charges	45,000
Miscellaneous Legal Expenses	28,000
Supreme Court of Judicature	140,000
Land Registry	18,000
County Courts	4,000
Police, England and Wales	17,000
Prisons, England and the Colonies	360,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	140.000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum	14,000

Scotland :—

Law Charges and Courts of Law	30,000
Register House, Edinburgh	15,000

	£
Crofters Commission, Scotland	2,000
Prisons, Scotland	38,000

Ireland :—

Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions	32,000
Supreme Court of Judicature, and other Legal Departments	43,000
Land Commission	55,000
County Court Officers, etc.	45,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police	60,000
Royal Irish Constabulary	600,000
Prisons, Ireland	50,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools	55,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum	3,000

CLASS IV.

United Kingdom and England :—

	£
British Museum	80,000
National Gallery	10,000
National Portrait Gallery	3,000
Wallace Collection	3,000
Scientific Investigation, &c. United Kingdom	22,000
Universities and Colleges, Great Britain, and Intermediate Education, Wales	48,000

Scotland :—

Public Education	750,000
National Gallery	5,000

Ireland :—

Public Education	760,000
Endowed Schools Commissioners	400
National Gallery	2,500
Queen's Colleges	2,500

CLASS V.

	£
Diplomatic and Consular Services	250,000
Uganda and East Africa Protectorates, and Uganda Railway	300,000
Colonial Services	340,000
Telegraph Subsidies and Pacific Cable	35,000

CLASS VI.

	£
Superannuation and Retired Allowances	300,000
Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, etc.	2,000
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances	1,000
Hospitals and Charities, Ireland	17,000

CLASS VII.

	£
Temporary Commissions	25,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	17,587
Repayments to the Local Loans Fund	– –
St. Louis Exhibition, 1904	60,000
Ireland Development Grant	184,000
Total for Civil Services	£14,170,000

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

	£
Customs	350,000
Inland Revenue	830,000
Post Office	3,800,000
Post Office Packet Service	250,000
Post Office Telegraphs	2,100,000
Total for Revenue Departments	£7,330,000
Grand Total	£21,500,000

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, Item, Class 4 (Board of Education), be reduced by £500."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN, continuing his speech, said that some appeals had been made to the Welsh county councils to abstain from the policy which they had adopted, but no expectations had been held out that if they did the Act would be amended, although it was admitted by all that it required amendment in the two vital principles, public control and the abolition of religious tests. It had been said that the Act did not impose new religious tests. That was true, but the Act had made every school a public school, and had placed the whole charges of the maintenance of the schools on the public funds, and therefore for the first time imposed a religious test on public servants. That was one of the things about which they complained. The only other point was that of religious facilities. It was common ground that facilities should be given in all schools for religious teaching. If denominational teaching was to be given at the cost of the State that was a solution of the difficulty for which Wales was not ripe, and therefore the only alternative was that the cost of the denominational teaching must be borne by the various denominations. He felt confident that if each side would trust more to the good faith of the other, a settlement could easily be arrived at, as to the time at which such teaching should be given in the schools. If the Government would only take a broad and statesmanlike view of the matter it would not be impossible to amend the rules so as to enable the provided schools to be retransferred to their managers if the arrangement entered into did not work satisfactorily. If the Government, instead of taking a broad and statesmanlike view, continued to try this stupid plan of repression they would still in the end have to give way, and the only question was whether they should now try and make the Act workable by giving Wales what she desired, or be forced to consent after considerable mutual recrimination. The county councils had been charged with using the schools for political purposes but had not the Church party also appealed to politics. Everybody knew the fight was entered into with the utmost alacrity by the Church party in Wales. For his part he did not share in this censure as to the political agitation. He thought, if politics were to be any more than a battle of place and profit, every man ought to take part. But one of the fundamental rules of the political game was that the Party defeated should admit defeat and if in power should carry out the legislation necessary. Purely secular teaching was not within the realm of practical politics, and when he knew the only way in which the Bible could be brought within the reach of our child population he would be loth to take part in any administration which would prevent it. Those who advocated purely secular teaching rather than denominational teaching were doing a very dangerous thing and should consider well before they adopted a plan which might result in the total exclusion of the Bible from the schools.

MR. GEORGE KENYON (Denbigh Boroughs) said there was no question on which he would like less to come into conflict with his Welsh friends than this. They in Wales had worked together and he had always been glad to back up Welsh ideas in national and educational questions. For many years they had been successful in keeping away what was called the religious difficulty and had managed to carry on their great University and the University Colleges without friction. The Church party had been much abused for the action they had felt it their duty to take with regard to what was called the concordat of the Bishop of St. Asaph, but he was present at the whole of the meetings, which were conducted with great urbanity and courtesy, at which, however, though principles were discussed, no decision was arrived at. In those days the hon. Member for Carnarvon was very friendly with the Bishop of St. Asaph and thought that he had captured him. The Bishop of St. Asaph, on the other hand, thought that he had captured the hon. Member. However that might be, the Bishop's position throughout the discussions was one of great moderation and his earnest desire was to promote a reasonable settlement of the difficulty. The concordat, however, broke down on what was called the Cowper-Temple Clause, which prohibited doctrinal teaching being given in provided schools in school hours. The hon. Member for Carnarvon on that point was asked whether he would give facilities for teaching dogmatic religion to the children in school hours, but the answer given was a diplomatic one, that he believed it was not possible under the law, but he would try and persuade his colleagues to take that course. It was on that that the negotiations broke down. The Church party had conceded the point that the teachers should be appointed by a joint body containing representatives of the county council and the diocesan conference, but they insisted that they must have adequate facilities for teaching the children in the schools, and not outside, and in school hours. But hon.

Gentlemen opposite really conceded nothing. The schools were the property of the Church party which had built them and maintained them to a large extent, and on every principle of right and justice they ought to have facilities given to them to teach the children in their own tenets.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said the Nonconformists gave a guarantee for general religious teaching in the non-provided schools, and were also prepared to give facilities for religious teaching in the board schools so long as that teaching was given technically outside school hours, surely that was something.

*MR. GEORGE KENYON regretted he could not quite follow the hon. Gentleman. He then quoted a letter written by the Bishop of St. Asaph, which he said meant that no facilities that could be offered to the Church party could be secured without the abrogation of the Cowper-Temple Clause, and, as the hon. Member for Carnarvon had stated, since he never dreamt for a moment of assenting to any arrangement which would have abrogated that clause. That was the whole history of the concordat in North Wales. He was free to confess he had gone to the conference with some reluctance. He did not think in the present temper of the people it was possible, in Wales, to arrive at any concordat which would be satisfactory to the Church and Nonconformists alike, but he hoped at no distant day, when the turmoil and hubbub was abated, it might be possible to arrive at some solution of this difficulty, which was really a very small part of the general education question. If the Church party were prepared to give so much, and the hon. Member was willing to go so far, in order to promote a fair and reasonable compromise, he did not despair of arriving ere long at a satisfactory arrangement. He congratulated the hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs on his return from his triumphal progress through the Principality. The hon. Member could stand on one of the mountains in his native land and survey the whole of the county councils at his feet. As to Jupiter of old they bowed themselves to his nod. He admired the abilities and the invective of his hon. friend. They were one of the assets of that House. But was it really worth all the invective, all the trouble, all the motor-car journeys, merely to deprive the children in the schools of warmth and gas and a few elementary reading books? Supposing the scale of political fortune turned tomorrow and the hon. Member found himself where his abilities and talents entitled him to be, would he still advocate a "no rate" policy on the part of the county councils of Wales? It would then be the hon. Member's duty to maintain the law, pending any alteration he might persuade his colleagues to make, and he would find some difficulty in adapting his present position with the really comfortable seat on the Treasury Bench.

There was not much heard about passive resisters in Wales; they were to a large extent obviated by the policy of the hon. Gentleman opposite. He only knew of one whom he saw before him, the hon. Member for Carmarthen. But there was more in these violent attacks on Churchmen, in the matter of the schools, than appeared on the surface. There was the latent idea that the present agitation would tend to the disestablishment of the Church in Wales by rendering her unpopular and making her responsible for the gathering of the rate. The present movement was only a step towards the greater and more acute controversy. The hon. Gentleman had doubtless secured for the present the support of the county councils, but throughout the Principality there were large numbers of Nonconformists who regarded this policy of illegality with dislike and even aversion. It might be that before long that feeling would gather strength, and then the action of the county councils would be as gall and wormwood to the hon. Gentleman and his friends. There was, at any rate, only one course open to those who believed that the *sine qua non* of education, in the interests of the children themselves, was a sound religious training—not undenominational, but dogmatic. This being so how could they do otherwise than separate themselves from hon. Gentlemen opposite. They would fight on until it was no longer possible to struggle, and they had to surrender to force. He congratulated the Government on having taken, somewhat tardily, after some hesitation, a line worthy of them in this matter. Without giving unnecessary offence, and in studiously moderate language, the hon. Baronet had shown that he believed it to be his duty to see that the law was carried out. That was the only consistent course open to the Government, and, if the present powers were not sufficient to enable them to pursue it, they must ask the House for further powers. He had never been a special lover of the Act in some respects, but he believed that, with all its defects, it would prove to be a great, judicious, and honourable landmark in the history of education.

*MR. BAMFORD SLACK (Hertfordshire, St. Albans), after craving the indulgence of the House on this the first occasion on which he had presumed to address it, said he would not have risen but for his sincere desire to contribute if possible to the peaceful and lasting settlement of this vexed and vexing question. He thought that he might without presumption claim to occupy a position which peculiarly fitted him to speak as to the attitude of the people of the country with regard to the administration of the Education Act. He had carefully watched its working, and in the recent election in which it had been his privilege to take part the education question loomed very large before the electorate; consequently he felt that he could not allow the present occasion to pass without neglecting the duty imposed upon him by his constituents. There existed amongst the people the gravest anxiety as to the principles involved in the Act, the most serious apprehension as to its method of working, and already the most sincere dissatisfaction as to its effects in practice. The hon. Baronet had said it was very difficult to distinguish between popular objection and organised obstruction. If he had been in the recent fray in Mid-Hertfordshire he would have found no difficulty in drawing the distinction. There was no organised obstruction to the Education Act; it was a spontaneous agitation arising from the fact that the conscience of the people had been aroused and stirred. The main objections to the Act were, in the case of the non-provided schools, that the whole cost of elementary education was now thrown upon public funds, whilst the effective control remained in sectarian hands; and, in the case of the provided schools, that the directly elected boards had been replaced by an appointed committee not directly responsible to any electorate. The foundation managers presumed upon their position because it had been legalised, and in some cases they overrode in the most shameless manner the locally appointed representatives. The new system afforded the gravest opportunities for the exercise of clerical influence, even in the provided schools which formerly were unsectarian. Popularly elected, though small, School Boards had given place to boards of managers appointed by the distant county council, the great majority of whose members were Anglicans. The constitution of the county education committees themselves gave great dissatisfaction. To a large extent they had been chosen from outside the county councils. Secondary election was bad in principle; it was of the essence of popular control that those who controlled the public funds should be liable to dismissal by those whom they represented and whose money they spent, and in no matter was this more essential than in education. In Hertfordshire more than one-third of the education committee had been selected from outside the council; thirty-five of the fifty-one members were Anglicans, two were Roman Catholics, and only fourteen were Nonconformists, although quite one-half of the scholars in the schools were Nonconformist children.

With regard to the constitution of the boards of managers, a similar state of things existed in Hertfordshire as in Carnarvon. Out of 170 schemes relating to Hertfordshire, 148 contained the provision that the four foundation managers must be members of the Establised Church, and this though the whole cost was now thrown upon public funds. In one case the rector, the two churchwardens, and the rector's curate were the four foundation managers; the County Council representative was an Anglican, and the representative elected by the parish council was the local Nonconformist minister, whose election was apparently resented by the rector as an insult to himself. To call that representative management was a farce. The people's representative was in a helpless minority of one; he was brow-beaten by the rector on every possible occasion; and when it came to the appointment of a correspondent for the school the rector appointed his own butler, at a salary of £10 a year, although the parish representative offered to do the work for nothing. In the school itself, even before the Act came into operation, there had been serious difficulties. The assistant master asked to be relieved of the office of organist in the church, which he held at a salary of £30 a year, and he was thereupon dismissed from the school, being told by the rector that the two offices went together. In St. Albans before the Act a Progressive School Board existed. Notwithstanding the strenuous opposition of the citizens, the city council last year decided to hand over the work of the board to the county council. The municipal elections in November turned upon the question, and for the first time in the history of St. Albans four Progressives were returned at the head of the poll for the four vacant places, as a protest against the action of the city council. Of the twelve managers of the provided schools in St. Albans, of whom eight were appointed by the county council, and four by the city council, seven were members of the Anglican Church and five were Nonconformists. This being the body which had taken the place of the Progressive School Board, could it be wondered at that the people of St. Albans resented the interference with the method by which they had managed their provided schools in the past? It was no matter of surprise that wide-spread dissatisfaction existed and passive resisters were to be found in that city.

The people of England were now realising how cunningly and with what subtlety the Act of Parliament was framed, how ingeniously and disingenuously it was contrived. It gave the semblance of popular control while the reality was absolutely denied. County councils could not effectively do the additional work imposed upon them. The divorce of taxation from representation and the permission to impose sectarian tests upon teachers whose salaries were paid by the State had revolted the conscience not only of Nonconformists, but of the majority of patriotic citizens belonging to all churches. He had found that farmers and others who had hitherto taken little part in national affairs had been aroused to indignation by the Act, and hon. Members opposite, when they came to face their constituents, would find that that was a fact with which they would have to deal. Conscience had been sneered at in this matter, but he thought those sneers were very misplaced. Was not conscience recognised as the religious authority in Protestant England as opposed to the authority of the Church in countries under the Roman communion? The solemn language so slightingly referred to by the hon. Baronet was the expression of a deep religious conviction, which no pressure, coercion, or jibes, would ever eradicate. The clerical party would find that the movement they had inaugurated would end in their own discomfiture; they had grasped after entire public support, and sooner or later they would have to submit to entire public control. Why should not all Parties in the House combine to establish a great homogeneous national system of education, whose first and only care should be the interests of the children? Why should they not remove all occasions for the unseemly strife which had arisen, and do all they could to quench the fires of religious persecution and bitterness which had been enkindled? Let them trust the people, who, after all, were the parents of the children in the schools, and let them not force particular theological tenets as elements of animosity into the elementary schools, which, it should never be forgotten, were really the nurseries of the nation.

Lord HUGH CECIL (Greenwich) said he observed that while they were often told that the main ground of the grievance of hon. Gentlemen opposite was the absence of popular control over elementary schools, the hon. Member opposite had found that element of popular control very strong, and had complained with great bitterness of the fact that the Hertfordshire County Council was composed mostly of members of the Church of England. He was amused to hear that, because the county council had appointed seven members of the Church of England to five Nonconformists, in substitution for a Progressive majority on the School Board, no one could be surprised that there were passive resisters. That was the consequence of the hon. Member's argument, and so they were to have passive resistance, not only whenever the foundation managers were in a majority and exercised the rights given them under the statute, but even in cases where the popular representatives controlled the provided schools. He had never had a strong objection to passive resisters. They were an interesting illustration of the right of the subject to rebel; but if principles of this kind were to be accepted, they ought to be applied on many other occasions. The cases of grievance which the hon. Member for Carnarvon had brought forward were all of the kind which he had always admitted—the grievance of the single school district. That grievance constituted a very hard case, but it was no remedy for it to substitute a Nonconformist for a Church majority in the management of the school. He must pass over those cases alleged by the hon. Member where Nonconformists had subscribed to schools without knowing that they were to be Church schools. Unless the parson had made a false declaration, the subscribers must have known. If the hon. Member could prove that——

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Certainly.

LORD HUGH CECIL: Then it was nothing against the Education Act, however strong a case for action under the Church Discipline Act. The only way to meet the single school difficulty was to provide for the religious convictions of all the inhabitants of the district, and they must meet the conscientious scruples of all sections of the community. The hon. Member opposite debated at some length the action of the county councils in Wales, and this question had been dealt with so elaborately that he would only touch very briefly upon it. The hon. Member for Carnarvon had played in Wales the part of what was called a missionary. The missionary was becoming quite a feature of modern politics. The hon. Member was the missionary of passive resistance. The function of a missionary was to induce constituencies to bully their representatives, and the hon. Member opposite had been more successful than another person, for he found more amenable constituencies and more plastic representatives. There was no one corresponding to the Unionist free-fooders in the Carnarvonshire County Council. Perhaps things would have been different if there had been. But it was a fact, at any rate, that the local education committee rejected the hon. Member's view, and he believed that the chairman, who was a Nonconformist minister, strongly attacked the hon. Member opposite for his views. Nevertheless, the hon. Gentleman persisted in his agitation. He remembered that when he once suggested that the Welsh county councils might not treat the Church schools fairly he was indignantly assured that the Welsh people were the most law-abiding in the world. That was before the hon. Member undertook his mission. Since then the character of Carnarvon had gone down steadily. Now they took another view, and were prepared to starve the schools. He sympathised deeply with the hon. Member's grievance in regard to single school areas. The hon. Member said that there were many Nonconformist schoolrooms that could be used, but that were not used because of the reluctance to divide the children into sects. He thought that the hon. Member overlooked the fact that the division was made once for all when Nonconformity was established. No doubt it was true that schism was a great evil. It would be much better if they could all be of one mind, and if all the children went to one place of worship on Sunday; it would be better for the community and better for the religious life of the country. But the Nonconformists had deliberately chosen the other alternative, and they had separated from the single unity which once existed. If there was to be a distinction drawn they should endeavour to make their educational system conform to their religious system. The hon. Member said that it would be perfectly easy to draw this distinction.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: At the ratepayers' expense.

LORD HUGH CECIL said this was a question of conscience, and surely the case was an overwhelming one. By his argument the hon. Member really gave away the whole ground of passive resistance which he had placed before the Committee. They had always been told that it was a religious scruple. It was not a religious scruple at all; it was a doctrine of social unity, a political theory, not a religious doctrine. It seemed to him that this destroyed the grievance whether they could find a school building suitable for use under Section 10 of the Act. He disapproved strongly of the attitude of uncompromising resistance to the existing Act, but he did not disapprove on the ground that the law was always to be obeyed. He thought it was legitimate to say that there were grievances which justified disobedience to the law, but they must establish a very good case, otherwise they might return to a state of anarchy. It was sometimes forgotten that the exact business of the Executive Government was to insist on the observance of the law. If Parliament made an alteration, that was another question; but as long as the law existed the Government should require its observance. Resistance to the Education Act was in the nature of an act of war, and as long as war continued there was no use in waging it in a half-hearted way. They must press their views to the utmost of their ability, but this fact should not prevent them from welcoming pacification on equitable terms, in bringing to an understanding all the different conflicting religious elements on an elastic and fair basis.

The House had been told that the matter might have been settled by the acceptance of the St. Asaph compromise. He was not able to accept the view that facilities outside school hours were satisfactory in any degree. First of all there was the practical inconvenience that children might be kept away. There was another argument that had not received sufficient attention. All these suggestions involved the idea that Churchmen were to accept the proposition that undenominational religious teaching had the same claim on the State as denominational. He could understand people saying that the State should have nothing to do with religion at all. He could understand the State saying that it ought to do its best to meet the desires of all sorts of religious beliefs; but he could not understand any one maintaining that the State should create a new established religion, that it should create a new Established Church of the realm in respect of education, and favour the suggestion that undenominational teaching was a better and more necessary thing, and that the rest was a sort of spiritual luxury which those who were fastidious might insist upon. Anything which raised in any way the presumption that they should prefer undenominational to denominational teaching ought never to be accepted, and he hoped never would be accepted, by the House. He thought the hon. Member for Carnarvon had used language in the past which did suggest some suspicion as to the way his proposal would work. In a speech delivered on 22nd January, 1903, the hon. Member argued that the school time-table should be arranged so that religious instruction might follow at the close of the school session and that those children desiring religious instruction should return and those who did not should continue to play. He thought that all the suggestions made by the hon. Member and his friends were devices to change for the worse the existing division between undenominational and denominational religion. There was a great difference between the point of view of Churchmen and Nonconformists in one respect. Nonconformists of undoubted convictions evidently attached more importance to the machinery of education than the Churchmen did. Churchmen, on their side, cared nothing for the machinery so that they should be assured of the result. They cared for the management of the school and the appointment of the head teacher, because these things enabled them to secure that the religious teaching should be of a particular character, and that the children should benefit by it. So far as he could judge, no machinery had yet been suggested which would afford to Churchmen and Roman Catholics an equal security for good religious teaching as the machinery that at present exists in non-provided or voluntary schools. This was not a Church of England question only. He should deprecate in the strongest way their separating in any degree their fortunes from their Roman Catholic friends, who had stood by them so loyally and so long. No settlement ought to be accepted by either party which was not satisfactory to both. Subject to that, he thought that on the lines his right hon. friend laid down there was a prospect of a settlement which might be not unacceptable to all parties. They had the power of appointing the teachers and he did not think that was an unreasonable provision. The teachers existed for the sake of the children, and if they wanted to teach the children a particular religion they must exact a certain religious standard. They must exact a certain standard of religious belief, or otherwise religious teaching would become a mockery.

Supposing they could adopt the system which he indicated in the Amendment which he proposed when the Bill was in Committee, supposing they allowed every local authority to teach any religious system they liked, supposing the parents expressed a wish for the religious system they preferred, and supposing they threw the duty on the local authority to carry out their wishes so far as it was practicable, he believed they would have gone a long way towards solving the problem. He did not believe local authorities would be unwilling to work such a system. It was worked in Germany and in the industrial schools of this country. The truth was the practical difficulties were grossly exaggerated. He knew what was in the minds of some hon. Gentlemen. They were afraid the system would be used for the benefit of a particular section of the Church of England, whom they regarded with great suspicion. They thought it was part of an elaborate propaganda by which it was desired to capture the children for the extreme High Church section. Surely, hon. Gentlemen mistook the signs of the times. There was a High Church movement, and a great many people whose zeal led them beyond the limits of discretion did injudicious things. The really formidable movement was a very different one. The real danger to be apprehended was from another quarter. The whole fabric of Christianity was in peril. He saw in every city and in every town growing indifference to religion. Public worship was notoriously much more neglected than it had been, and not only neglected, but where it was attended it was made as agreeable as possible in order that it might not be neglected. People attended church or chapel more for the music or the preacher than for worship. The whole Christian system seemed to be passing from the region of certainty into the region of doubt. People were not quite sure whether Christianity were true or not.

Mr. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Like free trade.

Lord HUGH CECIL said that no religion which had arrived at that point could long survive as an active force. The danger which he feared was not to the theological system, but to the moral system, for when religion was gone morality would go with it. Was not that a state of things which the Nonconformist as well as the Anglican and the Roman should try to avert? Those who thought that that was a pessimistic view he would ask whether in 1504 a break with the See of Rome, or in 1750 a revolution in France, seemed more probable than a break with Christianity appeared to-day. Great movements came in that fashion. They were latent for years, then suddenly they burst forth, producing lasting effects. Therefore his appeal was not so much in the interest of the Church as in the interest of Christianity. He wished to give to Nonconformists all the protection against proselytism in the schools which their ingenuity could devise. Indeed, no one desired to use the national schools of the country to convert children from one religion to another. All he desired was to make each child as good a Christian of his father's denomination as was possible. He agreed that the springs of human conviction lay beyond the schools to a great extent; but still in the schools much good might be done for Christianity. Even if they could influence one child in that direction it was worth doing. The enemy outside was more to be dreaded than the opponent within. The differences which divided the extreme Nonconformist from the extreme Roman Catholic were trivial compared with the differences which separated the Christian from the non-Christian. He asked them to approach the question of education from that point of view, and to make the schools of the country the citadel of Christianity.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said the noble Lord's speech was both amusing and suggestive. He noticed three admissions in the speech which seemed to him very valuable not only to this side, but to all parts of the House. He admitted that the Act needed amendment; and he was good enough to admit that the single-school district constituted a grievance for the Nonconformists, and that that grievance, if it were serious, justified resistance to the law. Their argument was that it was a serious grievance. He was, therefore, pleased to hear the noble Lord say emphatically that there might be justification for what used to be called the sacred right of insurrection. Lastly, the noble Lord expressed the hope that, on the lines indicated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University, some settlement might be arrived at. The noble Lord deplored the conditions which in Christian life were due to differences of belief. He ought to deplore them all the more, because it was a clear and palpable aggravation of these conditions if they began with children at the very first step, and taught them to regard one another with aversion. The noble Lord's argument appeared to be that things were bad and that it did not matter if they made them worse. It was not, as the noble Lord seemed to think, entirely a question of expense. It was a question of the worth of the education to be given. To set up two or three small schools in an area where there were only 100 or 150 children would be to make them absolutely useless—he meant by that, to make them ineffective—because they would not have the apparatus and the teaching which would enable them to do what was wanted for the children. That suggestion was really inadmissible. What was called undenominational religion consisted in matters on which all Protestant denominations were agreed in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred. It was in the rural districts where the difficulty chiefly arose, and there the Catholics were a small portion of the population. It was in the large towns where the difficulty with the Catholics arose. Therefore, the noble Lord must pardon him if he did not take him as the exponent of the feeling of the laity of the Church of England, though he recognised that the noble Lord worthily represented one school of thought in the Church. He believed himself that the general feeling of the laity was in favour of undenominational instruction, as was shown by the large support they had given to School Boards. As to the latter part of the noble Lord's speech, with the earnestness of which all who heard it must be impressed, he agreed both with his diagnosis of the age in which we lived and in the regret he had expressed at the tendency which was manifesting itself; but he differed from the noble Lord with regard to the remedy he proposed. It must not be supposed, however, that he regarded the tendency of which the noble Lord had spoken as a permanency. He saw no reason to entertain any grave alarm. That tendency might last for a generation or two and then disappear, as similar tendencies had done before. The noble Lord seemed to think that this tendency, which was in a certain sense a world movement, could be arrested by the simple expedient of giving children denominational teaching in the schools.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: He said just the reverse.

MR. BRYCE said that if the noble Lord would look at what had been done by education in the forming of opinion where the applicances were more effective and universal than in England, he would have reason to reconsider his opinion. In Protestant Germany the children got Protestant instruction. Had that made them as devoted to Christianity as were the children of the Protestant United States, where no denominational instruction was given? The sectarian teaching on which the noble Lord laid so much stress, related to points which did not incorporate themselves in the child's life, and which were not guides to its moral conduct because in a great majority of cases the child did not understand them at all. He agreed that a school ought to implant moral lessons in the mind of the child; but that was not to be done by the denominational part of the teaching, but by that part which belonged to the essence and foundation of Christianity.

They had had a debate which had dealt partly with the resistance of the Welsh county councils and partly with the merits, or demerits, of the Act of 1902. He ventured to say that his hon. friend the Member for Carnarvon had made his case in a very moderate and temperate way, and his contention was that, in such circumstances as the Board of Education found in Wales, they ought to act with caution and conciliation. Wales had a right to bring the matter forward, because its case was a peculiar one, the vast majority of the people—probably three-fourths, or even a larger proportion in many parts — being Nonconformists. Could any one say that the Act of 1902 would have been passed for Wales if it had not been that it was being passed for England? Was it not a little hard that Wales, which was a country, for ecclesiastical purposes, so unlike England, should have to suffer merely because the Government of the day thought the Act a good thing for England? The Secretary to the Board of Education had ascribed what had passed in Wales to the agitation of the Welsh Members. It was not the Welsh Members who had roused Wales. They only went to Wales because Wales was roused. The inflammable material was there and took fire of itself. Feelings of the same sort were rampant in Yorkshire. It had been seriously discussed in the West Riding whether or not the Act should be set in force. An agitation could never be got up unless there was material on which it could work. This was true about the passive resistance movement, which had been in an eminent degree a movement springing from the rank and file. It was the people, too, who had usually been very languid in their political opinions who had been stirred by this question. They were a class who had been amongst the most law-abiding, quiet, steady-going citizens of this country. What had impressed them had been, first, the idea that this was an Act which had put a strain on their consciences, and in the second place the belief that it had not moral authority because it was an Act which had not been properly passed. [An HON. MEMBER: No.] He was telling the Committee what was their view. It might be wrong. They thought that the Act was not submitted to the people in the way Acts usually were. They said that the Act had not the stamp of popular approval on it. He did not recollect any Act which had been passed, rightly or wrongly, which had carried so little moral authority as this Act had done. If the Secretary to the Board of Education did not know the feeling about the Act, which was entertained even in his own Party, he stood alone in that ignorance. It was impossible to go about England without knowing that a more unpopular Act had seldom appeared in the Statute-book. Its first result had been to produce confusion in the county councils, who had found suddenly imposed upon them a mass of work with which they were unable to grapple. The Act had involved them in an enormous increase of expenditure. The managers, not being the servants of the councils, were not trusted with so much work as they had been, and were disappointed in consequence. It was said that not only in Wales, but also in the South of England, the Board of Education were making Orders for the creation of Church of England managers where there was nothing in the trust deed to justify this.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said this was the converse of the complaint made by the hon. Member for Carnarvon. The Board of Education had, in fact, endeavoured to carry out the existing practice and usage.

MR. BRYCE said it was difficult to discuss this matter without having a concrete case before them. He would like to know what length of time would justify the Board of Education in making a school sectarian which had not been sectarian by foundation.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said that in each case they must go on the merits. The Board of Education had to consider the settled usage and practice of the schools.

MR. BRYCE said he was informed that protests had been received by the Board of Education from local authorities against their Orders, and perhaps if he put a Question on the subject, the hon. Gentleman would be able to tell him how many protests had been received. There was another difficulty about the managers which he thought ought to be mentioned. Transfers were being made. Was it required in all cases that transfers should be made without the reserve of any rent to the persons who had the freehold of the school? It was very important to bear in mind, when terms were to be given to schools in private ownership, that in many cases such schools were not private schools in the ordinary sense of the term, but charities. He should like to know to what extent the new schools which were being provided were provided by the local authorities and by the organisations.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said he answered that Question that afternoon.

MR. BRYCE said he was sorry he had not heard the hon. Gentleman's explanation. Among other difficulties that had arisen in the working of the Act were those in relation to the terms of transfer, the use of school buildings out of school hours, the refusal of managers, to put the buildings in a proper state of repair for such use, and the use of school buildings for infants, boys or girls, according to the needs of the locality. He was informed that there had been cases in which the managers, by insisting upon keeping up the school in a particular way, had obliged the local authority to incur the cost of providing another school. That was one of the cases which inflicted the country with a great deal of unnecessary expense. Another difficulty had arisen in connection with the appointment of teachers. He was told that the National Society had circulated a form of agreement for the appointment of teachers in voluntary schools and which it requested managers to use for all teachers. The terms of that agreement pledged the teachers to give religious instruction according to a syllabus or scheme to be approved of by the society from time to time. The local authorities denied altogether the right of the managers to submit such a scheme or syllabus to the teachers, and they contended that they had a right to demand that no embarrassing conditions should be attached by the managers to the engagement of teachers; that those conditions which the National Society desired to see imposed were improper conditions, and *ultra vires* of the managers. Was that so, and if so, what was the attitude of the Board of Education to it? Had the Board come to a decision on the point, and what was that decision? If the hon. Baronet desired time to consider the matter, good and well; but he did not wish to lose that opportunity of calling the attention of the Committee to it, because he was told it had given rise to a great deal of friction between local authorities and the managers in some parts of the country.

Lastly, he desired to ask what was being done to promote secondary instruction. Secondary instruction was most important at the present moment, and he feared that it would suffer from being associated with elementary instruction owing to the increased cost of elementary education. He was afraid that very little was being done by most county councils for secondary education, and that it was being allowed to fall altogether into the background. That was one of the greatest misfortunes attending the passing of the Act. He hoped the Department would urge the county councils to keep down expenditure on elementary education, so far as was consistent with efficiency, in order to have money to spare for secondary instruction. Secondary education, both general and technical, was one of the most important objects local authorities could have in England, and they should be constantly reminded of their duty by the Board of Education. When they were passing this Act, the First Lord of the Treasury had a favourite phrase by which he described it; he always spoke of it as being a great educational reform. Well, they had had some experience, although not complete, of the working of this great educational reform; and he must say that its chief result had been additional expense, additional confusion, none of that unity of administration which they were promised, and a great exasperation of ecclesiastical controversy, coupled with neglect of the most urgent needs of the country. There had been some consolation in that debate.

Everyone, except the Members speaking from the Treasury Bench, had admitted that the Act had been at fault, and required to be reformed.

He would not attempt to solve the riddle as to how the religious difficulty involved in the Act could be removed. Everyone had his own scheme. But there was a growing wish, and he regarded this with satisfaction, for an arrangement upon fair lines towards all denominations. They would only get a fair arrangement by admitting popular control. With popular control everything would be easy; without popular control everything would be difficult. He had been very glad to hear the Attorney-General give approval to the compromise suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University. There were moments during the debates on the Act of 1902 when they thought that such a compromise might be accepted; and therefore he could not feel too sanguine that it would now be carried out. But they all wished that Ministers would take the matter to heart at once, and try to bring about, through their influence on their own Party, some pacific arrangement; because it must be clear to everyone that the Act could not stand. He knew that the First Lord of the Treasury thought that the passive resistance movement was quite ridiculous; but it was a fact which the right hon. Gentleman could not deny. He was in the recollection of many hon. Members that the right hon. Gentleman had scouted the passive resistance movement altogether, and did so because he thought it absurd. The right hon. Gentleman was a great dialectician, and nobody had ever admired the First Lord's dialectical powers more than he had done this session, because, unlike the man in the play who endeavoured to persuade two ladies in separate rooms that each of them swayed his heart, he had endeavoured to persuade the protectionists in the presence of the free-traders that he was a protectionist—[MINISTERIAL cries of "Question"]—and had endeavoured to persuade the free-traders in the presence of the protectionists that he was a free-trader. [Renewed cries of "Question."] Hon. Gentlemen did not seem to like any reference to that; but he was only using it as an illustration, and not necessarily as an argument. With all his dialectical skill, the right hon. Gentleman could not argue facts out of existence. There were the facts—the facts that passive resistance existed, and that the Act was unpopular. He held that if they could see into the minds of hon. Gentlemen opposite, it would be found, at this moment, that all agreed that the Act must be amended; and he ventured to predict that whatever Government came into power after the next general election, they would have to deal with this Act. It was perfectly impossible to allow it to stand as it now stood. Indeed, the present Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education admitted that he would have to get greater power. The sooner they approached this work the better; and he hoped whoever did approach it would endeavour to give them a truly national and popular system, and would endeavour to set the country free from this ecclesiastical strife in order to make education a really progressive element in the life of the country.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I really should not have supposed that there were two speakers in this House more unlike each other, not only in their opinions, but in their style and methods, than the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down and my noble friend who preceded him. I should have thought that they differed on almost every subject, but that, if there was a subject on which they differed more than any other, it was the subject of education. And yet I observe that neither of them could keep out the fiscal controversy when they were touching upon this apparently alien theme. There is something—in such studies of political economy as I have made I have never been able to find out in what it consists—but there must be something closely connected between theological and economic controversy which makes it impossible for anyone to take a passionate interest in the one without going rather mad over the other. I do not say where the passion or the madness lies; but, at all events, they both have some intoxicating, and perhaps elevating, effect on the human mind, and when any gentleman passionately interested in the one begins to discourse upon one of these subjects, he seems insensibly drawn off into metaphors and arguments which pertain to the other. It is a psychological fact which I commend to those interested in the currents of opinion which sway this Assembly. The right hon. Gentleman, except in the latter part of his speech, sank very much below my noble friend in the breath of view and in the general treatment of the subject which he laid before the House. The right hon. Gentleman told me in particular, but the House in general, that in his judgment the Education Bill of 1902 was a very unpopular Bill and a very bad Bill. I did not know that it was a very popular Bill. I never brought it in believing that it would be a popular Bill. The Government, of which I was a member, never supposed that it was a Bill which would conciliate universal opinion or arouse great enthusiasm either among those represented by hon. Gentlemen opposite or among the general ratepayers of the country. What we did believe, and what we believe now, is that the time had come when a great educational reform was absolutely necessary, popular or unpopular. The right hon. Gentleman says the Bill is unpopular because it is increasing the rates.

MR. BRYCE: No; I did not say that quite. That is an element also, but it is unpopular for other reasons.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am alluding to an element of unpopularity to which the right hon. Gentleman alluded. Does the right hon. Gentleman suppose that he could have brought in a Bill which would have done anything whatever for education and in which the ratepayer would have been wholly spared?

MR. BRYCE: My case is that it is the machinery of the Bill—the dual control of the Bill and the complications and unnecessary multiplication of schools — which has greatly added to the expense.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman's panacea for expenditure is machinery, the economy of which would have been to maintain the School Board system universally, notoriously the most costly system this country has ever known, and to buy up at the ratepayers' expense all the voluntary schools of the country. That is the economy of the right hon. Gentleman. And the only mitigation I can see in the financial disaster which would have thereupon ensued arises from the fact that the right hon. Gentleman would have bought up the voluntary schools at much less than their proper value. I venture to submit to the House that in 1902 we honestly approached the great educational problem in no unworthy or sectarian spirit. Hon. Gentlemen may have disliked our particular solution. They may have preferred, I think the right hon. Gentleman does prefer, or would have preferred, a universal system of small School Boards all over the country.

DR. MACNAMARA: Large ones.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There was that plan; there may have been other plans. We adopted a plan large in its outlines, in conformity with the whole position in this country, and fitting in with our general system of local government. Of course there is some difficulty and some confusion, when you make a transition from the old system to the new, from the unreformed to the reformed system, but I believe it will be found, so far as secular education is concerned, that we have laid broadly and permanently the foundations of that which will hereafter be looked upon as the greatest educational reform this country has ever known. It was unfortunately impossible for us, as it would have been impossible for any Government sitting on this Bench, to deal with the general question of secular education without touching on the question of religious education, and when people talk of the unpopularity of this Bill, when they talk of the educational friction which this Bill has produced in nine times out of ten, in ninety-nine out of 100, they refer not to the difficulty with regard to secular education, but to the difficulty with regard to religious education. And how, may I ask, could any Ministry, be their political complexion what it may, have avoided that? I see opposite my hon. friend the Member for the London University, who made a most interesting speech this afternoon, a speech which interested me particularly because he is keenly alive to the needs of education, and he is altogether outside these unhappy religious controversies. And yet even my hon. friend could not avoid charging the Government with having unnecessarily stirred up religious feeling, and he measured our iniquities by the amount of the passive resistance which the Bill aroused. Did my hon. friend for a moment reflect how dangerous was the argument he employed? If we are only to measure the sincerity of opponents to any Bill by the amount of illegality [Ironical laughter from the OPPOSITION Benches.] —in any case it is very cheap illegality, because in the history of the world there has never been a less expensive form of martyrdom than the present—if my hon. friend measures the faults of the Bill by the amount of that sort of illegality it arouses, does he not see he puts a great premium upon the same kind of illegality being practised when any change in the Bill is made in the direction which the right hon. Gentleman opposite desires? I do not approve of these methods and I shall not encourage them, but the people who encourage them are those who say, "Look at the dreadful results you have produced; here are Mr. A, Mr. B, and Mr. C, all respectable law-abiding citizens who have all got their rates paid by somebody else! Is it possible that you should still maintain a law which produces this disastrous result?" Well, then another Party comes into office, they carry out the reforms foreshadowed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and then, instead of Mr. A, Mr. B, and Mr. C, getting their rates paid by somebody else, Mr. X, Mr. Y, and Mr. Z will follow the same ingenious procedure. What then is my hon. friend to do? He will again have to measure the iniquity of the new law by the same standard as that by which he measured the iniquity of the old law; and each successive Government will be impelled to what is called reform the law by the amount of illegal resistance to which that law leads. I think my hon. friend—and I still refer to him because I think him one of the most impartial persons in the House on this subject—if he looks back on the history of this question, will see that you cannot avoid the religious question, and that the Government in dealing with the religious part of this great educational problem have dealt with it in a manner of which the Nonconformists had very little reason to complain.

I am aware that I was charged, I think by the right hon. Member for Berwick, with a "perverse ignorance" of the feelings of Nonconformists. That may be so; it is certainly through no want of good will on my part; it may be through want of natural capacity. Certainly neither by training, habit, nor education am I disposed to rate low or to think ill of any sect of Christians because they are non-Episcopal. But I honestly admit that there have been arguments used by Nonconformists in this great controversy which I have never, with the best will in the world, been able thoroughly to understand. In what, for instance, lies the conscientious distinction, the moral distinction, between contributing to schools in which denominational religion is given out of taxes rather than out of rates? There may be a reason, but I can truly say that neither in this House nor out of it, neither in conversation nor in literature, have I ever seen that reason, if it really exists, stated in explicit or intelligible language. I have never been able to understand this argument about tests applied to teachers. The point was dealt with by my noble friend, I thought fully, and with his argument I am in entire agreement. I will endeavour to summarise what he said, and at all events hon. Gentlemen opposite, if they do not agree with me, will see where my difficulty lies. If you hold that education should be secular and that teachers engaged in secular education should not have the duty of teaching religion in any form thrown upon them, then I agree to require their conformity with the creed of any particular denomination is the application of a religious test in the true and in the offensive sense of the word, because the application of tests in its historic sense meant this, and nothing more than this—that you should compel a man to go through some religious ceremony before he obtained a secular appointment, which religious ceremony was intended to show conclusively that he belonged to this or that religious denomination, and did not belong to this or that other religious denomination. These are tests. That is what tests have always meant historically; that is what they mean now in the minds of anybody who thinks clearly on these subjects. But who would think they were applying tests when they made inquiries as to whether a tutor of their own family was capable of teaching their own religion to their own children? [AN HON. MEMBER: But they pay.] I will come to the question of payment in a moment. I do not think the hon. Gentleman has got up his own case.

DR. MACNAMARA: They do it at their own expense.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The whole theory, as I understand it, of the Nonconformists is that you can teach religion —a religion common at all events to all Protestants in board schools. Is it or is it not a religious test to find out whether the teacher who is going to teach that religion common to all Protestants believes in the religion common to all Protestants and is capable of teaching it? The hon. Gentleman who interrupted is wisely silent, and in truth his interruption does expose the hollowness of the whole proceedings. It is logical to refuse any inquiry into a man's religious belief so long as he is not going to teach religion. But as soon as you require him or expect him to teach religion, be it Roman Catholicism, be it Anglicanism, be it Wesleyanism, or any other form of religion, or, above all, or not least, be it the London School Board syllabus, as soon as you require him to teach that you ought to find out formally or informally, but effectively, whether he is capable of teaching it or not. I know I am not at one with the Nonconformists of this country, with whom I would most gladly live at peace; but, do the best I can, I honestly say I have never been able to see an answer to the argument I have just ventured to lay before the House. If I have failed to understand, as I admit I have, these objections of my Nonconformist friends, have they on their part been fair to the efforts which the Government have conscientiously made to alleviate the difficulties of their position? I have read a great many leaflets and a great many articles and a great many speeches delivered against the Education Bill of 1902 in what professed to be the Nonconformist interest. I have seen a great many statements which seemed to me to be absolutely in conflict with notorious facts. I have seen leaflets in which I really could not detect one specific statement that was true, and I have been informed, rightly or wrongly, that these pamphlets, in which I was unable to detect one single true statement, had been left with every householder over large areas in the country. I think that is very unfortunate, especially when the interests supposed to be at stake are the interests of religion. But while I have seen a great many things that I regret, there are some things which I have never seen at all. I have never seen the smallest recognition in any Nonconformist's utterances whatever—except some private letters which I have received from Nonconformists— of what I conceive to be great changes in our education system made entirely in the interests of Nonconformists. I used to hear before the Bill of 1902 was passed that it was an iniquity, considering in how many parishes the only school was a Church school, that no Nonconformist in those parishes could get his child the first start on the educational ladder by allowing him or her to be introduced as a pupil teacher. I believe a complete remedy was provided by the Act of 1902.

Mr. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W. R., Elland): A profession they cannot rise in.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am talking of the introduction into the profession. The complaint was that the parson of the parish restricted the choice to boys or girls belonging to his own communion. That has been completely changed. [“No.”] It has been changed as far as statute can change it. [“No.”] As a matter of fact, it has, and every boy and every girl has an absolute right, irrespective of religion, to become a pupil teacher. [“No.”] The hon. Gentleman says he cannot rise in his profession. Before I come to that, let me say—there were a few dissentients from the statements I made just now, but there will not be one dissentient from the statement I now make—that the condition of things after the Act of 1902 became law was incomparably better for Nonconformists in that particular than it was before. Now I come to what the hon. Gentleman said about rising in the profession. Before the Act of 1902, in the voluntary schools, unless under special trust deeds, it was impossible for a Nonconformist to obtain a large number of teaching positions. I know hon. Gentlemen claim that the head teacherships in voluntary schools have not been thrown open by law. That is true, but the number of subordinate places is far greater than the number of head places, and the subordinate places have been thrown open. [An Hon. Member: If the managers think fit.] The hon. Member thinks there may be obstinacy on the part of the managers, but, supposing there is, is not this an enormous improvement on the condition of things that we found before we set to work to deal with this matter? Then is this the Nonconformist point of view—that the system under which the school was entirely in the hands of the parson, who could forbid any child becoming a pupil teacher unless he or she belonged to the same denomination was a better system? Well, I need not pursue that further. Then we used to be told, and told with a great deal of truth, that in a large number of parishes, through no fault of the clergyman, but through his sense of public duty in most cases, the whole secular education was under his control, and that was made a matter of bitter complaint by Nonconformists. In the matter of managers they can no longer say that the one-man management of schools continues in any part of this country, and it is childish to say that from their point of view the Act of 1902 did not carry out a great reform in that respect also. Finally, the grievance I have always felt the Nonconformists had was in the matter of the education of teachers after the pupil-teacher stage was passed. It is the Act of 1902, and that Act alone, which has made provision by which Nonconformist teachers should get the teaching in their profession which would enable them worthily to carry out its high functions. I am not going to discuss all the questions raised by these points; but do critics opposite, who heard all these debates in 1902 and know that the account I have been giving of that Bill is an accurate account, think it fair controversy to come nigh to the spreading, or to make no protest against the spreading, of these amazing falsifications of the Act which have been thrown broadcast over the land, and never once in any speech, in any pamphlet, in any article, to suggest that in every particular the Act of 1902 is far more favourable to the Nonconformist than its predecessor? I was roused to make this protest by the remarks of the Member for Berwick-on-Tweed. I hope I have shown, at all events, that if I, with the best will in the world, have failed in some part to find myself in harmony with them, they have not acted with perfect justice towards the Government of which I am a member.

With that observation the last touch of controversy, so far as I am concerned with it, shall be put aside from the remainder of what I have to say. I concur absolutely with my noble friend in the speech he made this evening that there are interests before us, interests which we have got to safeguard, interests which are imperilled, incomparably greater than the relatively insignificant fights between this or that Protestant sect. I entirely agree—perhaps here my noble friend will not agree with me—I entirely agree with those who think that there is a body of truth common to all Protestant sects—I would venture to say common to all Christian sects—which may be most profitably and usefully taught to the children of this country. But are you going to settle what the common body of doctrine is by Act of Parliament? Do you think this House, do you think the late London School Board, or the present London County Council, or any other educational authority you please to name, is qualified by tradition, by learning, or by any gift except that of good will, to settle what is this common body of doctrine which is to be taught to the children of this country, and in which they may all agree. The task is impossible; and, if it were possible, this is not the age of the world in which a House situated like this House can undertake it. You must leave it, and you can only leave it, in logic, to the parents of this country to decide how that should be taught. If there be, as there may be, great difficulties in bringing to bear upon the problem the actual will and intention of the parents of each child, your solution is not, ought not to be, and cannot be, to say that, as the parents are incapable of saying in what denomination their children are to be brought up, it is to be left to the School Board or their successors to settle for them. And yet, although I see all these difficulties before us, I concur with those who think that there are symptoms that religious men in this country, be their denomination what it may, are becoming sick of these disputes, which do infinite harm to education, and, I would venture to say, do still greater harm to religion. But if the controversy is to be approached in the spirit of some Gentlemen I have heard to-night or on previous occasions, I do not see how this embittered strife is to be brought to an end. It cannot be brought to an end, I am confident, as long as one element in the Nonconformist programme is that in no circumstances shall you trench upon the Cowper-Temple Clause. You cannot work the Cowper-Temple Clause. I can imagine many systems which would be just, though I do not say that they would always be practicable; but I can conceive of no system which would be just and which would absolutely deprive the parents of the children of every provided school in the country of the opportunity of having those children taught in school hours the religion which they desire. That cannot be. It is not on those lines we can find any solution. Nevertheless I do feel that even as regards the Cowper-Temple Clause there is some change of feeling among those who have hitherto supported it, and that to obtain a really national system of education in which all sects might join, even this ancient prejudice—or, if they will allow me without offence to say, this ancient superstition—might be abandoned for a greater end. However that may be, I have no solution, here and now, even to suggest or hint to the House. On the solution of the question of the Welsh difficulty I have nothing to say in connection with the religious difficulty. All I have to say is in connection with the administrative difficulty. There I am convinced that, however much the hon. Member for Carnarvon—that missionary of peace and good will to all men—may differ from my opinions, he will at all events admit that the education of the children of Wales is a duty which devolves upon the Government of this country, and that, if it is not effectively carried out by those who are legally responsible for it, some remedy for such a state of things must be devised. I think he will allow, speaking as an educationist, and not as a Nonconformist, that to allow the children of Wales to go without their proper books and without the necessary machinery of education, to make it doubtful whether the teachers will be paid, and to leave the schools unheated and unrepaired is a state of things which no man, whatever his religious views may be, can contemplate with equanimity, and in which no Government can acquiesce. I hope that without any legislative interference on our part this lamentable state of things can be brought to an end. But if it cannot be brought to an end by those primarily responsible, then it seems to me that a clear duty lies before us, and we must take some measures which shall be effectual to see that the children of Wales do not lack the education given to the children in every other part of His Majesty's dominions.

Mr. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs), said he could not help telling the House that he was a passive resister, and that he was in good company. They had with them ministers of the Gospel, prominent citizens and well known members of society. He did not refuse to pay the rate in order that some one should pay it for him. At any rate he was honest in this matter. He refused to pay the rate because he considered that the Education Bill of 1902 was unjust, and he held that no man who had any conscience ought to agree with it.

Question put.

The Committee Divided:—Ayes, 128; Noes, 248. (Division List No. 53).

AYES.

Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt Hon Herbert Henry
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Brigg, John

Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellice,Capt EC(SAndrw'sB'ghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmund
Foster, Sir Michael (Lond.Univ
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gladstone,Rt Hn Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (Berwick
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones,David Brynmor(Swansea
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F(Accrington
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Randall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Middlemore,John Throgmorton
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Newnes, Sir George
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Perks, Robert William
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Reckitt, Harold James
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, William Snowdon
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn C R (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. Glamorgan E.)
Thomas,DavidAlfred (Merthyr)
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason John Cathcart (Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse Sir J T(Huddersf'd
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Lloyd-George and Mr. Haldane.

NOES.

Abraham William (Cork N. E.)
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen,Augustus HenryEden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn Hugh O
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn Sir H.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manc'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour,Rt Hn Gerald W(Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach,Rt Hn Sir Michael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Lt.-Col H F (Middlesex
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish V. C. W.(Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chapman, Edward
Clancy, John Joseph
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb,Sir John CharlesReady
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Delany, William
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt Hon.Sir JosephC.
Doogan, P. C.
Dorington, Rt Hon. Sir John E.
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt Hon Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J (Manc'r
Ffrench, Peter
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne

Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hon. EdwardAlgernon
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warick, S. W.
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson,Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn J E (Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon Maj Evans-(T'rH'mlets
Gore, Hn G R C Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hon. S F. Ormsby-(Linc.
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hammond, John
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Harris, Dr. Fredk.R. (Dulwich
Hayden, John Patrick
Heath,Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heath, James (Staffords, N. W.
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, RtHn H(Somers'tE
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J F. (Sheffield Brightside
Hozier Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Joyce, Michael
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T.(Denbigh
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson,John Grant(Yorks.NR
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long,Col. Charles W.(Evesham
Long,Rt Hn. Walter (Bristol S.
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft
Lundon, W.
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Maconochie, A. W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
MacArthur, Charles (Liverpool
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W.J.H.(Dumfriessh.)
Milner, Rt Hon Sir Frederick G
Montagu, G. (Huntington)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott(Hants)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray,Rt Hn A Graham(Bute
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway,N.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Peel, Hn Wm Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederick Carne
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Reid, James (Greenock)
Ridley, Hon M.W. (Stalybridge
Ridley,S. Forde (Bethnal Green
Ritchie,Rt.Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Roche, John
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild Hon. Lionel Walter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel,Sir Harry S(Limehouse
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith,H.C(North'mb.Tyneside
Smith,James Parker (Lanarks.)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn J G (Oxf'dUniv
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt Hn Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Sir Charles G E (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York E R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E.R(Bath
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

And, it being after Midnight, the Chairman proceeded, in pursuance of Standing Order 15, to put the Question necessary to dispose of the Vote.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported upon Wednesday; Committee to sit again to-morrow.

Adjourned at twelve minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 15th March, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—Blyth and Cowpen Gas. The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

Ipswich Dock Commission Bill [h.l.]; Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas Bill [h.l.]; New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company Bill [h.l.]; Barry Railway (Extension of Time, &c.) Bill [h.l.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Preston and Lytham Tramways and Tramroad Bill [h.l.]. Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [h.l.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Marylebone Chapels (St. James', Westmoreland Street) Bill [h.l.]. Read 2^a.

Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [h.l.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Site for Duke of York's School Bill [h.l.]. Committed.

Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time) Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^a, and referred to the Examiners.

Matlock and District Gas Bill [h.l.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [h.l.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [h.l.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [h.l.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Northesk be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Harrowby; read, and agreed to.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

PETITIONS.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES (METRIC SYSTEM) BILL [h.l.].

Petition in favour of; of the magistrates as the local authority of Glasgow; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3126. Greece (Finances for 1903).

No. 3127. China (Trade of Tientsin for 1900–1903).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

WILD BIRDS PROTECTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.
BISHOPRIC OF BRISTOL BILL [h.l.].

Reported from the Standing Committee without further Amendment. The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House to be received on Thursday next.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL [h.l.].
[Second Reading.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of Halsbury): My Lords, this is one of a considerable number of Bills which your Lordships have passed through this House and which, when they go to the other House excite no great interest and attention, with the result that at the end of the session there is no one to urge their importance and they are forgotten. This Bill in its exact terms passed through your Lordships' House last session. It is mainly for the purpose of removing what I am sure all the Lords Lieutenant throughout the counties in England have recognised to be a great inconvenience. By a very ancient statute the Lord Chancellor is directed—and, of course, he is bound to obey that direction—to only appoint persons resident in the county. It very often happens that there is an extreme want of justices in particular parts and that the residences of the persons most fitted to be appointed are just over the border, and in those circumstances the Lord Chancellor is obliged to refuse the recommendation of the Lord-Lieutenant. This is an inconvenience that has been recognised many times in the different counties, and which this Bill will remove. The Bill also provides that any person who is a justice of the peace by virtue only of holding or having held any office, may be excluded from the exercise of his functions as such justice by the same authority by which other justices can be removed from the commission of the peace; but the main purpose of the Bill is that which I have described. I have no doubt your Lordships will again read it a second time, and I trust that after it has passed this House it will meet with a better fate that it has hitherto done.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Earl SPENCER: My Lords, last session, when the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack brought forward this Bill, I ventured to express the hope that it would be carried. I am afraid I did not follow its career elsewhere, but during the course of the winter, acting as His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant in Northamptonshire, I recommended two or three gentlemen to the Lord Chancellor for appointment as justice who lived just over the border of the county. We had very few magistrates at two particular sessions, and it was very important, where there was a joint session, that there should be magistrates who could act for both counties. Not being aware of the fate of this Bill in another place, I recommended these gentlemen to the Lord Chancellor, who was, of course, obliged to decline to appoint them. A very great inconvenience arises from the present state of the law on this point, and therefore I sincerely trust that His Majesty's Government will urge on those who represent them in another place the great desirability of passing this very small measure, which I am sure in my county, and no doubt in others, would greatly facilitate the proper administration of justice.

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

The Earl of Halsbury.

PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN (AMENDMENT) BILL [H.L.].

[Second Reading.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

*__Lord ALVERSTONE__: My Lords, I need not detain your Lordships more than a very few moments in moving the Second Reading of this Bill. So far as amendments of the law are concerned, the Bill is identical with that which was passed by your Lordships' House last year. It is extremely important that the Bill should be sent down to the House of Commons at as early a period as possible, because all the experience that has been collected since last year shows that the amendments proposed by the Bill are very much desired. I have not re-introduced into the Bill any of the clauses to which objection was taken in your Lordships' House or in the Standing Committee. The operative provisions are those which your Lordships approved last year. Objection was taken, when the Bill was under discussion on the last occasion, to its form, on the ground that it referred to the earlier sections of the Act of 1894. I recognised the objection, but pointed out that it was difficult to amend the law and consolidate it at the same time. The discussion of last year has enabled me to accede to the view of your Lordships on the subject, and I have got over the difficulty this year by consolidating the law. The Amendments of the Act of 1894 will be found in italics in the print of the Bill, and the parts that are cut out are shown by erased print. In order to follow the amendments proposed in the law, all that your Lordships need read are the parts of the Bill which are in italics, and the parts struck through. All the rest is merely re-enacting the Act of 1894. The result will be that if your Lordships give the Bill a Second Reading, and it passes into law, we shall have amended, and, at the same time, have consolidated, the law. I feel that if the Bill becomes law several grave defects in the Act of 1894 will be remedied.

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*Lord Alverstone.*)

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

BRITISH FORESTRY.

*LORD BARNARD: My Lords, I rise to call attention to the Report of the Departmental Committee on British Forestry; and to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries whether His Majesty's Government propose to take any, and, if so, what steps to give effect to the recommendations of that Committee on the subject of education, instruction, and training in forestry. I am sure that many of your Lordships will agree with me that the growth of timber in this country is very far short of what it might be, and I think we are very much indebted to the late President of the Board of Agriculture, the late Mr. Hanbury, for the step he took in appointing this Committee. I think it is peculiarly appropriate that a subject such as this should be considered in your Lordships' House, so many Members of which are landowners. This is naturally a question which does not appeal primarily to the large proportion of farmers, and still less to townspeople. It is not in the position only of a landowner that I venture to address your Lordships on this subject. I have the honour to be Chairman of the Agricultural Committee of the Durham College of Science, which is situated in Newcastle-on-Tyne, forming part of the University of Durham, and is one of the educational establishments referred to in this Report.

The Report contains a great many valuable recommendations, but I propose, on the present occasion, to confine myself entirely to such parts as refer to education. Mr. Hanbury obviously had in his mind this point when he constituted the Committee, because his reference to the Committee was that they were to inquire into the present position and future prospects of forestry, and to consider whether any measures might with advantage be taken, either by the provision of further educational facilities, or otherwise, for the promotion and encouragement of that industry. The Committee refer to a Report of a Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed in 1885, and reappointed in 1886 and 1887, and they endorse the conclusions of the Select Committee as regards the neglected condition of forestry in Great Britain, the possibility of improvement, and the necessity for the provision of better means of education. The most important recommendations in the Report are, in my judgment, those which refer to education. They practically group themselves under three heads. It is suggested that in our Universities facilities for theoretical instruction and practical demonstration are required. What is already being done at Edinburgh University is quoted, and it is suggested that a similar course might be adopted at Oxford and Cambridge. The Committee also refer, I am happy to think, to a plot under the supervision of the University of Durham, where we are already doing some work of this character. They also suggest the possibility of the transference of the Forestry Department at Coopers Hill to a University centre, and they remind us that each University contains many students who could, with very great advantage, take up this subject. They also draw our attention to the fact that in our Colonies, as well as at home, the demand for experts in forestry science is certainly growing, and will continue to grow.

The second recommendation, or group of recommendations, which the Committee make refer to those gentlemen who are proposing to take up land agency or some other profession of that kind, who cannot afford to go through a long University course, but who desire instruction in that subject. The Committee state that they have had in evidence that comparatively few land agents possess a competent knowledge of forestry, and I think the experience of many of your Lordships will prove the accuracy of that assertion. In the third place, it is proposed that actual working foresters and woodmen should be provided with short courses or lectures at local centres, and should be given the means of obtaining some instruction, at any rate, in the subject. I do not suppose for one moment that technical instruction in any subject can make a man a really practical expert; but, on the other hand, technical instruction can raise the general level of knowledge on a subject, and vastly improve the general intelligence of those engaged in the practice of it. The Committee also state, and here I cordially agree with them, that they do not suggest any State loans for the purpose of forestry. I am very glad to see that, because I am perfectly sure that individual energy is far better developed in other directions. But, at the same time, they do advise that the State should concentrate any efforts it may make upon the provision of adequate facilities for instruction, and I beg to ask the noble Earl whether His Majesty's Government propose to take any steps to provide this educational instruction.

I may say that the Committee of the Durham College of Science, of which I spoke just now and of which I am chairman, have, as the result of their consideration of this subject, come to the conclusion that, with the machinery we already have at hand in the way of buildings and professors in allied subjects, such as botany, and so on, and with our clerical staff, we could, in the Durham College of Science, for a very small sum, set to work immediately and appoint a lecturer or demonstrator in agriculture. The sum which we have estimated we should require for this purpose is about £300. We consider that the services of this expert might, perhaps, be made available for the landowners in the district, and personally I think that, if landowners make use of him, they ought to pay for any advantage they get in that direction. Naturally, the fees from the class of persons who are to be instructed cannot be expected to amount to very much. The North-east of England has been in the past extremely generous and liberal in the sums which they have voted for technical instruction in the College of Science to which I have already referred, but the merchant princes of Tyneside cannot be expected to take very great interest in this particular topic. I fear, too, that we cannot appeal to the landowners, and if the instruction is to be given I cannot see how it is to be obtained except through the generosity of the Treasury. Personally I should be prepared to assist in providing some financial means, and I dare say other landlords in the north of England would do the same. But it is to the Government that we must look for any real advance in this matter. I beg to ask the Question standing in my name.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords, the subject to which the noble Lord has drawn the attention of your Lordships is undoubtedly one of very great importance. It is of importance, not only to Members of your Lordships' House, most of whom are landowners, but to the country at large. We are informed, on the authority of those who are experts in this matter, that the supplies of timber which we receive at present from foreign countries are diminishing in quantity, and that, in all probability in the future, if not in the near future, the value of timber is more likely to rise than to fall. At the same time it is common knowledge that there are very large areas, not only in England but also in Scotland, which yield but very little return.

EARL SPENCER: And in Ireland.

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: Yes, and in Ireland, which yield but very little return, and which, if planted, might be expected to yield a much greater return than at present. The noble Lord asks me whether His Majesty's Government intend to take any steps, and, if so, what steps, to carry out the recommendations of the Departmental Committee which was appointed to inquire into this subject. Well, my Lords, Committees and Commissions are appointed for different purposes. It has been said that many Commissions are appointed with a view to shelving a question. That is not the practice of the Department over which I have the honour to preside. When the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries appoints a Departmental Committee it is in order that it may get its advice, and, having got its advice, that it may act upon it; and the Committee to which the noble Lord has called attention is no exception to the rule. I am happy to think that that Committee had the advantage of being presided over by a Member of the other House of Parliament who has always taken a very great interest in this question, and that upon this Committee was also one of the Commissioners of His Majesty's Woods and Forests, Mr. E. Stafford Howard, who also takes a very deep interest in the question of afforestation, and it is to his exertions and initiative that we owe the first steps which have already been taken in this matter.

There are many areas of land belonging to the Crown which lend themselves to these purposes. There are the extensive Alice Holt Woods in Hampshire, which cover a large area of ground, but which, I believe, have not in time past been planted and worked on the most scientific principles; and although it was proposed by the Committee that the first experiment in this direction should be tried in these woods, it was found, on further consideration, that a more promising sphere of operations offered itself in the High Meadow Woods of the Forest of Dean. Without any assistance from the Treasury—an assistance which we always welcome, but do not always receive—the Commissioners of Woods and Forests have already established a school of forestry in the Forest of Dean. That school will be primarily for the purpose of educating men of the class of woodmen. They will pass through a course of instruction there which, it is believed, will fit them to become foremen on the large estates of those landowners who are prepared to devote time and money to this object. We have already a somewhat similar institution at Kew. We have an arrangement by which young men may come in and learn the business of gardening, and I think I may say that, without exception, every one of the young men who have passed through a training at Kew have secured for themselves excellent situations in private establishments. We fully hope that the experiment which Mr. Stafford Howard is trying in the Forest of Dean will result in training young woodmen in the same way that we are training young gardeners at Kew. The Department over which I have the honour to preside has no responsibility in regard to Scotland, but the Scottish Office has not been any more supine in this matter than has the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, and I am informed that, again through the agency and assistance of the Office of Woods and Forests, communications have been entered into with certain Scottish landowners with a view to securing a suitable area of forest land for the purpose of planting in the manner suggested by the Departmental Committee. We have also been successful in obtaining from the Treasury the promise of assistance in the foundation of at least two schools of forestry in England. Where those schools shall be established I am not yet able to inform your Lordships; but we have had applications from the University of Bangor, with which my noble friend Lord Powis is intimately connected, from the South-Eastern College at Wye, from the University College of Wales at Aberystwyth, from the Durham College of Science, and the Royal Agricultural College at Cirencester, and the matter is also under the consideration of the Yorkshire College at Leeds, the University College at Reading, and the University of Cambridge. With regard to the University of Cambridge, I have been considering whether that University would not be one of the first at which such a school of forestry should be established; but, as your Lordships are probably aware, a Committee has been sitting for some time past to inquire into the condition of Coopers Hill College, which up to now has existed as a school for the training of those who go out to assist in forestry in India. I am not in a position to say what may be the final decision of the Secretary of State with regard to the continued existence of Coopers Hill College, but it is, I think, a matter of common knowledge among those interested, that in recent years suggestions have been more than once made for the removal of the Indian forestry students from Coopers Hill.

I should like, naturally, to establish these schools in two localities, one of which would be devoted more particularly to the training of young woodmen, and the other to the training of young men who are themselves likely either to become landowners or to embrace the career of land agents, and I think that those two would be well found in a combination which should include either the school to which my noble friend Lord Barnard referred or the University of Bangor. Either of those would provide the requisite materials for the education of young woodmen, but I do not think they would to the same extent provide for the education of the young men who are themselves likely to become landowners. For that reason I should prefer that the second school of forestry should be attached to one of the great Universities. But that is a matter which still remains open, and until the decision of the Secretary of State for India has been arrived at as to the future of Coopers Hill College, I am not in a position to say where the second of those schools of forestry will be established.

There were many other recommendations contained in the Committee's Report, all of which are under consideration; but I think the main recommendations are those to which I have referred. This matter is one which is exciting a good deal of attention in the country at the present moment, and I believe there is a growing feeling that we should not be behind foreign nations in our knowledge of woodcraft, that we have opportunities which have not been made the most of, and that the time is fast approaching when we ought to devote greater attention to the woodlands of this country than we have hitherto done. It is with a view to the development of that method of utilising the soil that my Department is most anxious to encourage the training of young men of the classes I have named in the science of forestry, and we believe that by making a small beginning now we may lead up in the course of years to great results, and that the time may come when this country will be far more reliant on its own resources for the production of timber than formerly.

Lord AVEBURY: My Lords, as I had the honour of moving for the Select Committee which considered this question and of presiding for two years over its sittings, perhaps I may be allowed to express my pleasure that this subject has been brought forward, and the satisfaction with which I have listened to the speech of the noble Earl who has just sat down. When the question was brought before the House of Commons I made it my business to inspect several of the schools of forestry in various parts of Europe, and I found that it was a matter of intense surprise that we had no such schools in this country. We are the only country in Europe without forestry schools, and although our forests are not comparable, in point of dimensions, with those of many other countries in Europe, still they are larger than those of several countries which have flourishing schools of forestry. In Germany, particularly, they would hardly believe it when I told them that such a practical nation as Great Britain had no schools of forestry, and the opinion was generally expressed that if they were established here they would do a great deal to improve the value of the lands which are under wood and bring many thousands of acres now comparatively useless into cultivation. I therefore congratulate His Majesty's Government on the steps they are now taking, which I cannot help believing will be of great value to the agricultural interests of the country.

*The Marquess of GRANBY: My Lords, I congratulate the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries on the statement he has just made with regard to the educational facilities which he hopes may be provided for the teaching of forestry. But there is one thing which must be remembered. It is this, that a very large portion of the land in this country which could be afforested is in the hands of private owners, and under the existing law there is not very much encouragement for landed proprietors to plant largely, such as there might be if some of the provisions existing in other countries were adopted here. In certain countries—in Russia particularly, if I am not mistaken—newly-planted plantations are charged neither Imperial nor local rates for thirty years after the time of their planting, provided nothing is cut down in them during that period. It is not likely that a man planting a large area of land will get much return during his lifetime. His successors may, possibly. But I would call your Lordships' attention in that respect to a paragraph in the Report of the Departmental Committee which touches on that most delicate and difficult subject—the estate duties. The Committee wind up by saying—

> "Moreover, the pressure of such a death duty on timber must both act as a bar to afforestation in districts most needing it, and compel the realisation of immature timber, thus preventing the practice of sound forestry. We feel that this irregularity in the incidence of the duties needs immediate revision."

It is not, of course, within the province of this House to go into this particular matter, but it does seem to me that, if we are to induce private owners to take up any sound system of afforestation, something will have to be done in the direction I have indicated. The Report upon the condition of the forests and woodlands of the United States of America affords very remarkable reading indeed. You will see in it that even with the millions of uncut trees that there are in the United States there is not more than sixty years' supply extant, and it is quite impossible in that period to make good that supply. The same thing obtains in Sweden and Russia. One of the largest wood importers in the North of England has been dinning into my ears the importance of getting everybody to plant as much as possible, because he says it is extremely difficult to get really good sound timber. The difficulties are becoming greater every day, and matters will get worse owing to the fact that large tracts of woodland in Russia, Sweden, North America, and Canada have been cut down regardless of the future. It is on those grounds that I was pleased to hear the statement of the noble Earl, for every little encouragement that can be given to the subject of forestry is of the greatest possible value to this country. I would suggest to those of your Lordships who have not read the reports of our representatives abroad respecting the forestry laws of other countries that it is quite worth their while to study them. They afford the most remarkable testimony of the extreme care, the great common sense, and the great national foresight which most of the European countries are now showing in respect of this matter, and in the very forefront of those countries is Germany, where perhaps the most scientific forestry is being practised.

*LORD REAY: My Lords, as the noble Marquess who has just sat down has pointed out, we are very much behind Germany in this matter. In the University of Munich alone several years ago there were seven professors dealing with forestry, and I think it is not an exaggeration to say that Germany is honeycombed with schools of forestry of a higher and a lower degree. Then in France, as is well known, at Nancy they have an admirable forestry school. The question of training forest officers is extremely important with a view to India. In India we have had for some time a scientific system of administration of the Government forests, and we are more advanced in India than we are in this country. Very satisfactory results have been obtained in India, also with regard to grazing areas. With reference to what the noble Earl said about the new schools, of which the foundation is, I hope, very near, I trust that in selecting sites for those schools care will be taken that the students should have opportunities for gaining practical experience in the laying out of forests and plantations. The great want felt at Coopers Hill has always been that there were no forests which the students could visit in order to obtain object lessons; and it is well known that the students at Coopers Hill have to be taken abroad in order to see the application of the theoretical teaching they have received. That undoubtedly ought not to be required, for we have in England and Scotland all the elements that are necessary for good practical teaching. The noble Earl has not alluded to a most important feature of forest administration—namely, the provision of experts who can give advice to landowners in the laying out of plantations. I believe that the Board of Agriculture has a gentleman, Mr. Fraser Storey, who is available for this purpose, who has been himself educated in Germany, at Eberswalde. It is essential that in the management of forest areas landowners should consult experts, and that they should be available in every district of the United Kingdom. We shall then have the laboratories which are needed to make the training in forest schools efficient. The authorities in England, Scotland, and Ireland should encourage estate agents to apply for this expert guidance. I am glad to see my noble friend the First Lord of the Admiralty in his place. I believe he has taken the initiative in laying out his woods according to scientific plans, as has also been done by my friend Mr. Munro Ferguson of Novar in Scotland. They have made a valuable contribution to the solution of a problem which hitherto has not been sufficiently recognised. Then we have heard nothing with regard to Scotland, which, of course, does not come under the control of the noble Earl. I hope that if England is to have two schools of forestry, we shall have at least one school in Scotland. At present very admirable lectures are given in the University of Edinburgh by Colonel Bailey who has had much experience in the administration of forests in India. But a forestry school in Scotland should be established in one of the many forest areas and there will be no lack of students. I trust that the noble Earl will be able to carry out vigorously and without delay the schemes he has explained to us.

*THE EARL OF POWIS: My Lords, I also wish to thank the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries for the interest he has taken in this matter. With regard, however, to one passage in his speech, I must say I feel great anxiety. The noble Earl was most kind in receiving a deputation from North Wales, and he also made a very interesting speech when he visited Bangor this year. The noble Earl then led the people of North Wales to believe that Bangor would be selected for one of these schools of forestry. I do not in any way wish to compete with my noble friend Lord Barnard, who has brought this subject before your Lordships to-night, but still I do feel very strongly that Wales is one of the best constituted parts of the country for the study of forestry. With regard to the ancient University of Cambridge, at which I had the honour to be educated, and which I should not in any way wish to deprecate, I cannot myself see, so far as forestry itself is concerned, that the University of Cambridge is quite suited for such a school. No doubt it is desirable to educate young men in the University of Cambridge in forestry, but I should not regard the district of Cambridge as being one of the best districts for timber growing. I think it is most important that these schools of forestry should be situated where the students can have a practical opportunity of studying the formation of extensive plantations. My noble friend who initiated this discussion stated that this was not primarily a subject of interest to the working classes. I should have thought that if there was one subject of primary importance to the working classes, it would be the advancement of forestry in this country, which would provide considerable labour in the agricultural and hilly districts. If the large bare hillsides, which at present employ the very minimum number of hands, were under timber, they would constantly require attention, with the result that work would be provided for a large number of the working classes. I would press upon the Government that this is a matter of urgent importance. With regard to what the noble Earl said in his reply as to the timber of foreign countries running short, I would read to your Lordships the following extract from the Report of the Departmental Committee—

> "It will be found in our evidence that experts of high authority have recorded the opinion, already expressed in many reliable publications, that the world is rapidly approaching a shortage, if not actual dearth, in its supply of coniferous timber which constitutes between 80 and 90 per cent. of the total British timber imports."

There is one other point to which I would draw the attention of the noble Earl—namely, to the fact stated in the Report that no individual effort is likely to cope with extensive afforestation. I think this difficulty could be overcome if some encouragement were given to landowners to plant—some such encouragement as that suggested by the noble Marquess below the Gangway. I would venture also to suggest to the noble Earl that he should approach the Treasury—I do not say immediately—with a view to money being advanced to landowners on easy terms to encourage them to plant large areas. The reason for this suggestion is that landowners, of course, cannot, especially in these days, lock up a large amount of capital for a long time, and if, as I would venture to suggest, it is of importance not only to landowners but to a great many other people in the country that land should be afforested, it is surely worthy of the consideration of the Department whether some method such as I have foreshadowed could not be adopted to render the afforestation of waste lands easy.

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: I desire, with your Lordships' permission, to say one or two words in reply. Of course, one of the main objects we have in view is the training of experts who may place their services at the disposal of those who wish to undertake planting. I ought to have expressed my thanks to the noble Lord who introduced the subject, and to the noble Lord who has just sat down for the great willingness they have shown to give every opportunity to the students of the schools of forestry of availing themselves of practical experience in the woods that they own. The noble Lord who has just sat down referred to what I said at Bangor. I can assure him that the University in which he is interested, as well as the college in which my noble friend Lord Barnard is interested, are prominent amongst those which will be considered by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries for these two schools.

The House adjourned at twenty minutes past Five o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 15*th March*, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

London United Tramways Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Bexhill Water and Gas Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee.

1. "That, in the case of the St. Marylebone Electric Lighting Bill, Petition for Additional Provision, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to introduce their additional Provision if the Committee on the Bill think fit."

2. "That, in the case of the Marylebone Chapels (St. James', Westmoreland Street) Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with. That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

3. "That, in the case of the Acton Improvement Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of the Brentford Gas Company, against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

Resolutions agreed to.

North Staffordshire Railway Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 1).

Mr. KIMBER reported from the Committee on Group No. 1 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Thursday, at half-past Eleven of the clock. Report to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 4).

Mr. RUSSELL REA reported from the Committee on Group No. 4 of Railway Bills, That the parties opposing the Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill had stated that the evidence of Superintendent Horace J. Bantick, D Division, Metropolitan Police, Marylebone Lane, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Horace J. Bantick do attend the said Committee To-morrow, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That Superintendent Horace J. Bantick do attend the Committee on Group No. 4 of Railway Bills To-morrow, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act for rendering valid certain Letters Patent granted to William Young and Alexander Bell in respect of an invention for Improvements in the decomposition of mineral oils for the production of illuminating gas, and to William Young in respect to Inventions (1) for Improvements in the production of illuminating gas from mineral oils and in apparatus therefor and for producing water gas and (2) for Improvements in the production of illuminating gas and bye-products from liquid hydrocarbons and in apparatus therefor." [Young and Bell's Patents Bill [Lords.]

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act to enable the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company to raise further capital." [London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the Provost, Magistrates, and Councillors of the Burgh of Govan in connection with their electricity undertaking; and for other purposes." [Govan Burgh (Electricity) Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Corporation of Appleby to purchase the undertaking of the Appleby Gas Light and Coal Company, and to supply gas within the borough; and for other purposes." [Appleby Corporation Gas Bill [Lords.]

Young and Bell's Patents Bill [Lords]; London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill [Lords]; Govan Burgh (Electricity) Bill [Lords]; Appleby Corporation Gas Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Falkirk, against; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES (TAXATION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Falkirk, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from South Durham; Kiveton Park; Devonport; Llangarnech; St. Ives; North Finchley; Bingley; Hyde; Bishops Stortford; Failsworth; Willesden; Gloucester; Warrington; Moss Side; Manchester (four); Middlesbrough; Doncaster; Cheetham Hill; Crumpsall; Litlington;; Croydon; Llanbadarn (two); Bala; Kennington Park; Hereford; Kington; Skegness; and Cinderford; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE.

Petition from Wrington, for extension to women; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.

Petitions against; from Gloucester; Hove; Brighton; and Salisbury; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOUR ORDINANCE).

Petition from Donside, for withdrawal; to lie upon the Table.

VIVISECTION.

Petition from Bristol, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY (DOCKYARD EXPENSE ACCOUNTS, 1902-3).

Annual Accounts presented, for 1902–3, of Shipbuilding and Dockyard Transactions, etc., with Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 100.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Return of the Areas, Population, and valuation of Counties, Burghs, and Parishes in Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAYS ABANDONMENT.

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting the West Metropolitan Railway (Abandonment) Bill and the objects thereof [pursuant to Standing Order 158B]; referred to the Committee on the Bill.

HARBOUR, ETC., BILLS (HUMBER COMMERCIAL RAILWAY AND DOCK BILL).

Copy ordered, "of Report of the Board of Trade on the Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 101.]

MAGISTRACY (IRELAND).

Copy ordered, "of Correspondence between the Lord Chancellor of Ireland and Mr. Thomas M'Donagh, J.P., since the 3rd day of September, 1903."—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 102.]

ALIENS.

Address for "Return showing the names of all Aliens to whom certificates of naturalisation have been issued, and who have taken the oath of allegiance, between the 1st day of January, 1903, and the 31st day of December, 1903, giving the country and place of residence of the person naturalised, and including information as to Aliens who have, during the same period, obtained Acts of Naturalisation from the Legislature (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 86, of Session 1903)."—(*Mr. Cochrane.*)

SUGAR DUTIES.

Return ordered, "showing the weight entered for home consumption at each degree of the polariscopic scale and the gross revenue received thereon since the re-imposition of the sugar duties in each month of the calendar year, with the total for each year and the average gross duty received per cwt. of sugar, the number of analyses made, and the total cost to the revenue of analysing the imports of sugar."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Volunteer Active Service Companies—Officers and Army Rank.

SIR LEES KNOWLES (Salford, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if, in view of the fact that three active service companies from the three Volunteer battalions of the Lancashire Fusiliers were raised in succession, each under an Army Order identical in every respect as to conditions and period of service, the length of service being for the duration of the war in South Africa or for one year, and that honorary Army rank has been granted to the officers of the first two companies upon retirement from the Regular Army, he will reconsider the recent War Office ruling that, although they served till the end of the war, the officers of the third company are ineligible for honorary Army rank because their actual service in South Africa did not exceed six months.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) When the grant of honorary Army rank to officers of the Imperial Yeomanry and Volunteer companies was approved it was decided that it should be based on a minimum qualifying service in South Africa, and a period of six months was accordingly fixed as the limit. No relaxation of this rule has been made. There are many officers affected and several with longer service in South Africa than those mentioned in the Question, who only served three and a half months there, but I am not aware of any sound grounds for reconsidering the rule.

Cottage Homes Bill.

MR. JOHN HUTTON (Yorkshire, Richmond): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to Paragraph IX. of the Special Report from the Select Committee on the Aged Pensioners Bill, recommending the extension of the system of cottage homes; if so, will he say whether he proposes to bring in a Bill to carry such recommendation into effect, or will give assistance to enable the Cottage Homes Bill, which was brought in on the 19th February in the present session, to become law; and whether he will also introduce legislation to provide for the removal of imbeciles from the workhouses, as recommended by the Select Committee on the Cottage Homes Bill of 1899 and the Select Committee on the Aged Pensioners Bill, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am aware of the paragraph mentioned; but I am afraid that I cannot make any promise of proposing legislation during the present session on the subjects referred to in the Question, nor do I think that I can give any pledge with respect to the Cottage Homes Bill, which was brought in on the 19th February last.

Housing of the Working Classes—Repayment of Loans by Local Authorities.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will say what is the maximum period, provided under statute by order of the Board, for the repayment of loans contracted by local authorities for the purposes of the Housing of the Working Classes Acts; and what is the maximum period of repayment permitted by the Public Works Loan Commissioners in respect of money lent by them for those purposes.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The maximum period for which local authorities can borrow for these purposes is eighty years, and is fixed by The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1903; but if any such loan is advanced by the Public Works Loan Commissioners, the maximum period allowed by law for its repayment is fifty years.

Parcels Post—Cash-on-delivery System

Sir JOHN ROLLESTON (Leicester): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he proposes to introduce the cash-on-delivery system in connection with the parcel post; and, if so, whether, before proceeding further with the scheme, he will lay upon the Table copies of the speeches of the deputations to him and of the correspondence upon the subject.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I must beg to refer the hon. Member to an answer which I gave on the 22nd February to a Question on this subject asked by the hon. Member for North Tyrone.† I do not think that anything would be gained in the present juncture by laying on the Table of the House copies of the voluminous correspondence which has taken place.

Carriage of Mails at Dungloe, County Donegal.

Mr. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether it is proposed to substitute carriage of mails by the new light railway for the existing mail car service to and from Dungloe, county Donegal; and whether he can arrange that there shall be a longer interval than at present between the arrival and departure of the mails

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The question of forwarding the mails for Dungloe by the new light railway instead of by mail car is under consideration, and when a decision is arrived at I shall have pleasure in communicating the result to the hon. Member.

Promotion in the Inland Revenue (Excise Branch).

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state what percentage of assistants entering the Excise branch of the Inland Revenue service can pass beyond the rank of first class officer; and if he will instruct the Civil Service Commissioners to insert this information in the papers supplied to candidates for appointments in the service.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) To determine the percentage of assistants entering the Excise branch of the Inland Revenue service who can pass beyond the rank of first class officer would demand an actuarial calculation. It can only be said that of places open to persons entering the Excise as assistants, the number of posts carrying a salary in excess of £250 (the maximum pay of a first class officer) at present stands to the number of posts carrying salaries not exceeding £250 in the proportion of 1·5. The proportion is, of course, subject to variation from time to time. I think it would not be desirable to publish this information in the notices issued to candidates by the Civil Service Commissioners.

Promotion of Senior Assistant Clerks, Abstractor Class.

Mr. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state the number of, and offices wherein senior assistant clerks, abstractor class, have been promoted to positions other than that of second division clerks (with the usual certificate from the Civil Service Commissioners), together with the minimum and maximum salary, and annual increment in each case.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxx., 564.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The numbers are — Admiralty three, Colonial Office four, Customs five, Board of Education one, Home Office two, Inland Revenue two, Patent Office five, Post Office five, Prisons Department (England) five, Reformatories Office (England) one, Treasury one, Office of Woods one. I will communicate the further details asked for to the hon. Member.

Pensions of Assistant Clerks, Abstractor Class, Compulsorily Retired.

MR. YOXALL: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in view of the recent compulsory retirements at the General Post Office and other Departments of assistant clerks (abstractor class) of over thirty years' service, on pensions of about 12s. per week, the Government will take steps to bring these men within the terms of a Treasury Minute which allows a gratuity, not exceeding one year's salary, to officers who have not earned a pension equal to one-half of their salary at the time of their compulsory retirement at sixty-five years of age.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The Minute in question refers to officers appointed to established situations before retirement at sixty-five was made compulsory by Order in Council. It was part of the original conditions of the appointment of clerks of the abstractor class that they should be subject to compulsory retirement at that age, and the Minute, therefore, does not apply to their cases.

Civil Service Estimates—Votes on Account.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, having regard to the fact that in several Civil Service Votes a Vote on Account has been taken for almost the entire sum required for the service of the year, whereby the Vote in question has been practically removed from the control of the House, he will give some explanation of the reasons for which it was necessary to obtain such large grants in the case of the Votes for Osborne; Secretary for Scotland; Dublin Metropolitan Police; Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions; Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances; Hospitals and Charities, Ireland; Miscellaneous Expenses; St. Louis Exhibition; and Ireland Development Grant.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) Osborne. The progress of expenditure is uncertain, and a round sum is taken. Secretary for Scotland. The statutory Grant in Aid (£20,000) to the Congested Districts Board is paid in April. Dublin Metropolitan Police. The Dublin Police Tax, which is the chief item of the Appropriations-in-Aid, is not received within the period of the Vote on Account. Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions. Taken in round thousands. Two quarters have to be provided for. Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances. Round thousand. The bulk of the payments fall early in the year. Hospitals and Charities, Ireland. The grants to hospitals are paid early in the year. Miscellaneous Expenses. Some large payments have to be made early in the year, others at uncertain dates. St. Louis Exhibition. The Exhibition takes place this summer. Ireland Development Grant. The grant is applicable in the first instance to statutory purposes under the Irish Land Act, 1903.

Fees to Medical Witnesses in Metropolitan Police Courts.

DR. RUTHERFOORD-HARRIS (Camberwell, Dulwich): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that, although the allowances to medical witnesses in criminal cases in Courts throughout England and Wales have, in accordance with the recommendations of the Departmental Committee which reported on the subject last year (as stated in the Memorandum prefixed to the new Scale and dated 12th November, 1903), been considerably increased, there is no such increase in the fees allowed to medical witnesses in the Metropolitan Police Courts; and, if so, whether, seeing that under the statutory rules and orders establishing the new scale, all the previous rules and regulations made under Section 5 of the Criminal Justice Administration Act, 1851, have been revoked, he will explain why the regulations made for the Metropolitan Police Courts on 31st July, 1875, remain in force.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I think the Question is based on a misapprehension. The old regulations under the Criminal Justice Administration Act, 1851, have been revoked, and the new regulations, which increase the fees allowed to medical witnesses, have been fully brought into force in the Metropolitan Police Courts. There is no difference between their application in the Metropolitan Police Courts and their application in other Courts. The Act of 1851, however, does not provide for the payment of fees to witnesses in all cases; but only where the prosecution is for certain defined offences (including all felonies and the more serious misdemeanours). In the case of minor misdemeanours, the law makes no provision for the payment of witnesses. In those minor cases for which the law does not provide it has been the practice for many years in the Metropolitan Police Courts to pay certain fees to medical witnesses from police funds. These fees are not affected by the new regulations under the Act of 1851, and continue to be regulated by a different scale from that governing the statutory fees.

Native Labour in the Transvaal — Commission for Recruiting in Central Africa.

Sir BRAMPTON GURDON: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the British Central African Administration receive a commission on every native recruited for employment in the Transvaal, and, if so, what is the amount.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) No, Sir. The 10s. fee alluded to in Major Pearce's telegram of 25th March, 1903 (Africa, No. 2, 1903, p. 2), has never been enforced, and the Administration has received no money on account of recruitments for South Africa.

Payment of Temporary Medical Officer at Enniskillen.

Mr. JORDAN (Fermanagh, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the action of Mr. Considine, a Local Government Board auditor, in surcharging three members of the Enniskillen Board of Guardians on 2nd February last in the sum of two guineas, part of an amount paid by the guardians to Dr. J. E. Johnston for two weeks, as *locum tenens* for Dr. Tate, in the Hallywell division of the Enniskillen Union; is he aware that, after advertising and making other efforts, the guardians were unable to procure the services of any medical man at four guineas a week, and were compelled to pay five guineas rather than deprive the poor of the division of medical attendance, and that, owing to letters from the Local Government Board, the guardians refused to pay the full amount agreed on until legal proceedings were initiated; and whether, seeing that no other action was open to the guardians under the circumstances, and that the three members surcharged only officially signed the treasurer's authority of the ordinary sheet of payments, he will take steps to remove the surcharge.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Local Government Board cannot express an opinion in respect of the legality or equity of this surcharge until the matter comes before it in the manner prescribed by Statute, namely, on appeal from the persons aggrieved.

Preparation of Jurors' and Voters' Lists by Clerks of Unions.

Mr. HUGH LAW: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to resolutions of the Boards of Guardians of Glenties and Innishowen, county Donegal, urging a repeal of Section 83 (7), of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, in order to restore to the clerks of unions the duty of preparing the jurors' and voters' lists; and what action he proposes to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I have nothing to add to my reply to the similar Question addressed to me on the 25th

February by the hon. Member for Mid Cork.†

The Licensing Bill.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the number of refusals to renew licences at the recent Brewster Sessions, notably at Scarborough, Swansea, Whitby, and Keighley, arising through no misconduct on the part of the licence holders; and whether, in view of these facts, he is prepared to expedite the introduction of the Government Licensing Bill, or to make its provisions retrospective.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) It is premature at the present time to make any statement as to the provisions of the promised Licensing Bill.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Volunteer Active Service Companies—Officers and Army Rank.

* SIR LEES KNOWLES (Salford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if, in view of the fact that three active service companies from the three Volunteer battalions of the Lancashire Fusiliers were raised in succession, each under an Army Order identical in every respect as to conditions and period of service, the length of service being for the duration of the war in South Africa, or for one year, and that honorary Army rank has been granted to the officers of the first two companies upon retirement from the regular Army, he will reconsider the recent War Office ruling that, although they served till the end of the war, the officers of the third company are ineligible for honorary Army rank because their actual service in South Africa did not exceed six months.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): When the grant of honorary Army rank to officers of Imperial Yeomanry and Volunteer companies was approved, it was decided that it should be based on a minimum qualifying service in South Africa, and a period of six months was accordingly fixed as the limit. No relaxation of this rule has been made. There are many officers affected, and several with longer service in South Africa than those mentioned in the Question, who only served three-and-a-half months there, but I am not aware of any sound grounds for reconsidering the rule.

* SIR LEES KNOWLES asked if the rule was made after the officers had accepted the conditions of service?

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT replied in the affirmative, adding that, on the other hand, when the officers accepted the conditions of service there was no undertaking that they should have honorary Army rank.

Welsh Smokeless Coal.

* SIR LEES KNOWLES: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the annual consumption by the Navy, and the cost, in each of the past ten years, of smokeless steam coal, distinguishing in each year the amount and the cost of the coal from Wales; and if he will state the amount of smokeless steam coal for naval purposes in the possession of the Government.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): The details asked for in the first part of the Question are not immediately available. With regard to the second part of the Question, it is not considered desirable in the public interest to state the amount of steam coal for naval purposes in the possession of the Government, but care is taken that adequate reserves are maintained.

* MR. LEES KNOWLES: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that at the time of a recent international scare the possible enemy of this country was buying every ton of output of Welsh smokeless steam coal, in order to prepare for war with Great Britain?

West Indian Exports.

MR. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will grant a Return of the exports of fruit and sugar from Jamaica and the West Indies to England, Canada, and to all other countries, for the year previous to the granting of steamship subsidies, and for the year 1903.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxx., 1,000.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): A Return giving as nearly as possible the information asked for by the hon. Member will be laid almost immediately, but details for the year 1903 are not yet available.

Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that under the laws governing Asiatic immigration into Trinidad and British Guiana it is made a special criminal offence for any employer, manager or officer to assault, or in any way ill-use, an indentured immigrant; whether the Transvaal Ordinance contains any such provision for the protection of the Chinese labourers; and, if not, whether he will insist on such protection being provided for in the Ordinance.

*MR. LYTTELTON: There is no such provision in the Ordinance; the offences referred to are sufficiently dealt with by the existing law of the Transvaal.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether he is aware that provision is made by the laws governing Asiatic immigration into Trinidad and British Guiana enabling indentured labourers to absent themselves from their labour in order to obtain redress summarily in the Colonial Courts for ill-treatment complained of by them, or for wages withheld from them; whether there is any provision in the Transvaal Ordinance enabling Chinese labourers to obtain such redress in the Courts of the Transvaal; and, if not, whether he will secure the insertion in the Ordinance of provisions giving like protection to Chinese labourers.

*MR. LYTTELTON: There is no special provision of this nature in the Transvaal Ordinance, but under Section 3 it is the duty of the superintendent to act on behalf of the labourer in bringing before the Courts any complaints as to the matters therein referred to.

MR. LOUGH: Cannot the right hon. Gentleman promise that the labourer shall have some liberty to protect himself and not depend entirely on the superintendent?

*MR. LYTTELTON: They will have every liberty, but the superintendent will probably be able to act for them more effectually.

Government Sanction to the Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state whether it has been finally decided to sanction the Ordinance for the importation of Chinese indentured labour into the Transvaal; and, if so, when such sanction will be given. May I further ask, whether the statement published in newspapers that the proclamation which makes the Ordinance definitely operative has been issued, is correct, and whether it has been issued with the authority of His Majesty's Government.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The Ordinance has been sanctioned. I have no information as to the proclamation.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Is not the Ordinance sanctioned when it receives the assent of the Governor, subject to the King's right to disallow it?

*MR. LYTTELTON: Under the suspensory clause, the operation of the Ordinance is suspended until the King's pleasure in giving or withholding his sanction has been signified.

Transvaal Opinion on the Labour Ordinance.

MAJOR SEELY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can now state what reasons he has for supposing that the majority of the inhabitants of the Transvaal are in favour of the importation of Chinese indentured labour into that colony; and what is the total estimated number of adult male whites in that colony.

*MR. LYTTELTON: Until the figures of the census are obtained it will not be possible to give any estimate on which my hon. and gallant friend can safely rely.

White Labour for Gold Mining.

MAJOR SEELY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can now state what proportion of the total annual output of gold, elsewhere than in the Transvaal, is produced by white labour; and whether he has any official information showing that the conditions are more favourable to the employment of white labour in the case of such mines as employ white labour, than in the mines of the Transvaal; and, if not, in what districts conditions are less favourable.

*__MR. LYTTELTON__: I cannot say what proportion of the output of the world, outside the Transvaal, is produced by white labour, nor do I receive the detailed information which would enable me to compare one mine with another. But broadly speaking, wherever there is no coloured population the conditions for the employment of white labour are more favourable than they are in the Transvaal.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Why not refer the matter to a small Commission for inquiry?

[No answer was returned.]

Quebec Legislative Assembly and Irish Home Rule.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the fact that in the despatch of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, when Colonial Secretary, acknowledging receipt of the resolution of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Quebec, dated 25th April, 1903, approving of land legislation then before the House of Commons, and expressing the hope that in the near future the Parliament of Great Britain would grant self-government to Ireland, acknowledgment is made by reference only to the portion of the resolution dealing with land legislation; and, if so, can he explain the omission of any reference in the Colonial Secretary's despatch dated 23rd June, 1903, which suggested self-government for Ireland; and whether he proposes to send an amended reply.

*__MR. LYTTELTON__: There is no intention of sending any further reply.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): Why was no reference made to that part of the despatch which referred to self-government for Ireland?

*__MR. LYTTELTON__: That Question should be addressed to my predecessor on his return.

Convicts in South African Mines.

MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can now state the number of convicts employed in the mines in South Africa, and the terms of the contracts whereby they are employed, and especially whether any payment is made for the services of the convicts employed other than that required by the Act of Cape Colony, No. 28, 1888, for their safe custody and maintenance.

*__MR. LYTTELTON__: I am unable at present to give these particulars, for which I have asked by a despatch by mail.

Whisky Adulteration.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will consider the expediency of instructing revenue officials to prohibit the mixing of raw grain whisky with malt whisky in Government warehouses under their supervision.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this Question. There is no power to issue such instructions.

Canadian Pig-Iron.

SIR CHARLES McLAREN (Leicestershire, Bosworth): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if his attention has been called to the increase in the export of pig-iron from Canada to this country; whether he is aware that this iron enjoys a bounty of 12s. a ton; and whether the Government propose to take any steps to protect the iron trade of this country against colonial bounty-fed competition.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Baronet's Question appears to be founded on a misapprehension of the facts. The imports of pig-iron from Canada, which rose to over 50,000 tons in each of the years 1901 and 1902, fell last year to under 4,000 tons. There is a rise in the first two months of the present year, but the figures are still far below the average of the two years 1901 and 1902. I should add that these figures include American iron shipped through Canada. I am aware that a bounty on export is given by Canada on a scale diminishing year by year. It now amounts to about 12s. 5d. per ton of pig-iron produced from Canadian ore, and to about 8s. 3d. on pig-iron produced from foreign ore, and is subject to a reduction each year till 1906–7, when it will be 35 per cent. of the original figures. The abolition or modification of these bounties would be a proper subject for consideration whenever our fiscal and commercial relations with our Colonies come under review.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): Do these figures include Canadian pig-iron coming from American ports?

Sir CHARLES McLAREN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Canadian ports are closed during the winter?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I am not certain whether the figures I have given include Canadian shipments from American ports, but I will, if the hon. Baronet puts down a specific Question, make inquiries on the subject.

Income Tax on Bank Dividends.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the London and Westminster Bank, Limited, as agents for the Cape Government, deducted from dividends paid 15th April, 1903, a sum in excess of the amount due for income-tax; and, if so, will he state what sum in excess of the income-tax was thus paid, and how much has been returned by the Inland Revenue to stockholders.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The distribution of the dividends in question was made prior to the Resolution of the House of Commons fixing the rate of income-tax for the year 1903–4, and the bank, therefore, on paying the dividends deducted tax at the rate in force for the previous year, *i.e.*, at 1s. 3d. in the £., or 4d. in excess of the rate subsequently imposed. The bank declined to undertake the adjustment of the excess deduction except upon conditions which the Board of Inland Revenue were unable to accept, and it was therefore left to the individual stockholders to apply to the Board for a refund of the duty overpaid upon their dividends. Repayment has been granted in every case in which application was made.

Mr. WEIR: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the last two Questions?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The money has been returned in every case in which it has been claimed, and if any further claims are made they will be paid.

Mr. WEIR: How much has been repaid?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I am unable to say.

Mr. WEIR: I will put another Question down. It has been a case of swindling right and left.

East African Trade—Steamer Subsidies.

Mr. NUSSEY (Pontefract): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government propose to grant a subsidy to a line of steamers trading with the East Coast of Africa; if so, whether tenders will be advertised for, in order to ensure the service being done at lowest cost to the taxpayer; and further, if, before adopting this course, time will be given for the matter to be discussed in the House.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.): No decision has been arrived at in regard to the question of granting a subsidy to steamers trading with the East Coast of Africa.

Overcrowding on London Railways.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the third class carriages of trains on the Metropolitan Railway Extension are frequently so overcrowded that passengers are compelled to stand; and, if so, will he communicate with the railway company on the subject with a view to the provision of more accommodation on this line.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I have communicated with the railway company on the subject of the hon. Member's Question and in reply they write as follows:—"With the trains as at present composed of coaches of three classes it may happen, at certain periods of the day, that some particular class is for a short time inconveniently full, but the company are now constructing corridor coaches which will obviate this, and as soon as they are able to work trains electrically considerably more accommodation will be given."

Return Railway Tickets.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, having regard to the fact that several of the leading railway companies have extended the period during which return tickets are available, will he make representations to the Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railway Companies with a view to secure similar concessions.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I see no reason at present for interfering, in this matter, with the discretion of the railway companies referred to.

Royal Commission on Trade Disputes.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can state the date of the note appended to the Estimate for the Royal Commission on Trade Disputes, in which it is said that the Commission appointed 6th June last has held three meetings; and why it is that the Commission is not expected to finish its work before the end of 1904.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): The note was dated 20th November, 1903. I understand that the Commissioners have not yet decided as to the number of witnesses they will call, and that the duration of their labours cannot yet be forecasted with greater certainty.

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the trades unions refused to give evidence before the Commission?

Highland Crofters—Supply of Seed Oats.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, having regard to the nature of the harvest in the Highland crofting counties, will the restrictions which have been placed on the supply of seed oats to some of the congested districts be withdrawn; and will he state what quantity of oats has been supplied by the Congested Districts Board this year, and at what price.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The Board are not prepared to vary the conditions which they have adopted as a matter of policy after full consideration. 224½ quarters have been supplied, carriage paid, at 21s. per quarter.

Irish Development Grant—National School Requirements.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he intends to make any provision out of the Development Grant Fund for changing the limit of attendance in National schools in Ireland and providing the additional teachers required.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The question of reducing the existing average required for assistant teachers received my earnest consideration. It was not, however, found possible to effect the desired change in the Development Grant Estimate prior to a consideration of Mr. Dale's Report.

Irish Land Judges Court.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of estates that have been removed from the Land Judges Court since the passing of the Act of 1896, the number of estates sold within the same period, and the amount of the purchase money.

Mr. WYNDHAM: It is not possible to give the number of estates sold or removed, because many estates dealt with have in part been sold and in part removed from the Court. Advances amounting to £3,811,321 have been sanctioned for the purchase of lands administered by the Court to the 31st December, 1903. The greater portion of this amount, namely, £2,880,528, has been advanced since the passing of the Act of 1896. In addition, there have been large cash sales and sales of non-agricultural hereditaments. I have already stated that the gross rental under Receivers has been reduced by 50 per cent. since 1895.

Congestion in Castlebar.

Dr. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, seeing that the inhabitants of the district of Keelogues, near Castlebar, county Mayo, labour under disadvantage owing to its not being a scheduled congested district as specified under the Congested Districts Board (Ireland) Act, while in reality there are several congested villages in it, he will see that it is made a scheduled congested district, thereby enabling them to partake of the benefits of the Act.

Mr. WYNDHAM: No, Sir, I do not propose to legislate on the lines suggested. Congestion outside the scheduled districts can be dealt with under the Land Acts.

Sligo Motor Service.

Mr. WILLIAM McKILLOP (Sligo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether a motor service will be established under the Iveagh and Pirrie scheme between Sligo and Ballina, and whether it will be worked in connection with the service between Ballina and Belmullet.

Mr. WYNDHAM: No, Sir; it is not proposed to establish a service between Sligo and Ballina.

Mr. P. Chevenix Trench.

Mr. P. A. McHUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. P. Chevenix Trench, one of the six land agents appointed arbitrators by the Local Government Board for Ireland since the passing of The Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, is officially described as a Fellow of the Surveyors' Institute; and will he explain what is the Surveyors' Institute, what are the qualifications for membership, by whom are the qualifications tested, and is the Institute officially recognised by the Irish Government.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I am aware of the fact stated in the first part of the Question. The Surveyors' Institute of the United Kingdom was founded in 1868, and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1881. Information in respect of membership can be obtained from the officials of the Institution; the address of the Irish branch is 110, Grafton Street, Dublin. The Institution receives no special recognition from the Irish Government.

Eyrecourt Convent Schools.

Mr. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether plans and specifications for the building of the Convent National Schools at Eyrecourt, county Galway, were lodged at the Education Office and approved by the Board's officers more than two years ago; whether, in view of the present condition of the old schools, immediate steps will be taken to sanction the grant required, so that the building may be proceeded with.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I understand the manager has consented to wait until the new building plans have been approved. In respect of these plans I would refer to my reply, on Friday last, to the Question of the hon. and learned Member for North Louth.†

Irish Development Grant.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer from what dates, respectively, did the additional grant for education in England and Wales, consequent on the Education Act of 1902, and the Irish

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† See page 855.

Development Fund Grant, begin to accrue, and what was the amount paid on account of each grant in the financial year 1903–4.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Aid Grant under the Education Act, 1902, begins to accrue from different dates in different localities. The amount that will be paid in respect of the grant in the present financial year cannot yet be stated. The Ireland Development Grant Act provided that two-thirds of a full year's grant should be paid in the current year.

St. Patrick's Day.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, seeing that St. Patrick's Day is a legal holiday in Ireland, all the employees engaged on ordnance survey in that country are to be granted a holiday on the 17th March.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): The reply to the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative.

NEW BILL.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

"To amend The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894," presented by Mr. Runciman; supported by Sir Charles Cayzer, Sir Robert Ropner, Mr. Russell Rea, Colonel Denny, and Mr. Austin Taylor; to be read a second time upon Monday, 16th May, and to be printed. [Bill 128.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee).

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

CLASS IV.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £29,500, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Expenses of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland."

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) renewed the Motion of the Member for West Kerry on a recent occasion for a reduction of the Vote by £100, the debate not having been brought to a conclusion by reason of the Rules of the House. He proposed, therefore, to again raise the question of the action of the National Board of Education in issuing a circular, the effect of which was to limit the teaching of Irish in certain National schools in the country. He did not propose to traverse the ground travelled by his hon. friend; it was sufficient for him to say that there was on those Benches a strong opinion as to the effect of this circular, and that opinion was shared almost universally in Ireland. From every part of Ireland he had himself received resolutions from all sorts of elective bodies protesting against the action of the National Board; and it was not too much to say that there was a feeling of intense indignation at this circular, the effect of which was to diminish the opportunity of Irish children for learning Irish in the schools of the country. It took away the teaching of Irish from the younger class of scholars, who were just the scholars who ought to be taught it. He considered they would be wanting if they did not make a formal protest, and for that reason he begged to move a reduction in the Vote of £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £29,400, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover) said the hon. Member had reminded him that Supply prevented him rising on the Motion of the Member for West Kerry; and he would therefore say now what he should have said then. The hon. Member was pressing him to give some assurance that he would give his attention to this circular. He would say now what he could not say then. He had given special attention to this circular. He had addressed a number of inquiries to the National Board of Education with respect to the document; and he had received a reply, the contents of which were communicated by him in reply to a Question by the hon. Member for West Kerry. He did not know whether that reply was quite satisfactory, or whether it was only partly satisfactory; but he hoped to show that it went a very long way to remove the apprehensions to which the circular might give rise. Under the old results system no special fee was payable for Irish in any class lower than Fifth. Under the new regulations a fee would be payable in classes as low as the Fourth. A competent teacher unconnected with a school would be eligible to earn fees and would not be penalised in any way, as might be assumed from the terms of the circular, because of the failure of the school teacher to conduct his school in such a manner as to earn a "good" report. Moreover, it was intended to give Inspectors a discretionary power to recommend that a teacher of a school should be allowed to earn fees in extra branches under exceptional circumstances even though the teacher failed to secure a "good" report at his school. And Inspectors would be required in their reports to take into account the social condition and ages of the pupils, as well as the locality of the school and any other circumstances that might require or suggest exceptional treatment. The National Board admitted these were points of importance and they were prepared to modify the circular in these directions. He had given this matter his personal attention, and clearly Irish children ought not to be excluded by the circular from obtaining instruction in Irish, and hon. Members might rest assured that it would be his part to endeavour to see that no undue restrictions were imposed.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said the right hon. Gentleman had spoken of his own views on the subject. They were very well known, and he freely admitted that he had expressed again and again sympathetic views. He said they might rest assured that it would be his part to see no undue restrictions were imposed, but he himself had repeatedly told them that he had no power to see anything of the kind. He had no control over these gentlemen. They issued their circulars and regulations quite irrespective of him, and when they had issued a circular such as the present one he had to go, such was the absurd system, to them, cap in hand, and beg them to modify it. In this instance, he hoped to induce them to do so; but this was not a satisfactory explanation, and he should certainly press his Motion to a division.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 141; Noes, 130. (Division List No. 54.)

AYES.

Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Ellice, Capt EC(S. Andrw's Bghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir FrancisH(Maidstone
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Gladstone, RtHn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (Berwick)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West.)
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis

Leese, Sir Joseph F(Accrington
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, Norta)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh N.
Mooney, John J.
Morley, Charles (Breconshire
Murnaghan, George
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col John P. (Galway, N.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Dowd, John
O'Shee, James John
Partington Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Perks, Robert William
Priestley, Arthur
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn C R (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J T(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captian Donelan.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt Hn Sir H.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A J.(Manch'r
Balfour Rt Hn Gerald W(Leeds
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F.(Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A.(Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W.(Derbyshire
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A.(Worc
Chapman, Edward
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Rt. Hon Sir John E.
Douglas Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon A. Ralph Douglas
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J.(Manc'r
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S.(Warwick SW.
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gordon, Hn. J. E.(Elgin&Nairn
Gordon Maj Evans-(T'r H'mlets
Gore, HnG. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hon. S.F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton Marq. of(L'nd'nderry
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hobhouse, Rt Hn H.(Somers't, E
Hope, J. F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt Hon Arthur Fred.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.(Salop.
Kerr, John
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson John Grant (Yorks, NR
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol S)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Maconochie, A. W.
Malcolm, Ian
Maxwell, Rt Hn. Sir H. E.(Wigt'n
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn. A. Graham(Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (Greenock)
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Ridley, S. Forde(Bethnal Green)
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt Hn Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Sir Charles G. E.(Notts.)

Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
WilloughbydeEresby, Lord
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E.R.(Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

MR. JOHN REDMOND moved that Progress be reported. It was unnecessary to fortify the Motion with any words, for it was evident to the House that discussion in Committee of Supply could not now be continued.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I see no great object——

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): In continuing the Government.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I see no great object in assenting to the Motion of the hon. and learned Member. I understand he has succeeded in reducing a grant to Ireland by £100.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: In defeating the Government at a cost of £100 to Ireland. It is money well spent.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: It is an end of the farce.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know why the hon. Member for South Donegal is so very excited over it. The hon. Gentleman who moved the reduction and succeeded in carrying it, objected to my statement that he had induced the Committee to reduce the Vote proposed by the Government by £100. He has truly said that, as the Vote was proposed by the Government, in so far he has had his way in defeating the Government. That is obvious on the face of the transaction. Why on that account we should be unable to go on with Supplementary Estimates I am unable to see.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): Are you going to take it lying down?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: We have to get through a considerable amount of financial business before 31st March, and I do not think it is expedient or desirable that one of the too few days remaining should be wasted in discussion in the lobby or elsewhere, which the hon. and learned Gentleman seems to think should be the consequence of the incident that has just occurred.

MR. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside) thought hon. Members should be well satisfied with the result, and he could not understand why they should not go on to discuss other items in the Supplementary Estimates. He admitted that the question of the teaching of the Irish language was an interesting one and that the debate on it was too short. But there had been a reduction of the Vote, and he supposed the advocates of the study of Irish would thereby gain an accession of strength for their movement. What, he asked, was the next business in Supply?

***THE CHAIRMAN**: The next Supplementary Vote for Savings Banks.

MR. J. F. HOPE said it was important that they should proceed to discuss the Vote for the Savings Banks' and Friendly Societies' Deficiencies in view of the fact that on Friday next the Bill dealing with that subject would come up for discussion.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Has the Savings Bank Vote anything to do with the Motion to report Progress?

***THE CHAIRMAN**: The hon. Member is entitled to point out what will be the next business in case Progress is not reported.

MR. J. F. HOPE said he desired to call attention to the fact that they were going to discuss the savings bank's deficiences. Next Friday there was a Bill to be brought forward to deal with savings banks, and no doubt then there would be a great deal of elucidation of the subject. As they all knew, the Supplementary Estimates had to be got through before the 31st of March. He thought they ought to discuss the question of the savings banks in a business-like and sensible way.

MR. DALZIEL asked if the Prime Minister was going to ignore the decision of the Committee? Did his remarks mean that he was going to take no notice of the decision of the House? [AN HON. MEMBER: The Amendment has been adopted.] He wished to know if the right hon. Gentleman proposed to accept the decision just arrived at, or did he propose to reverse it. Would he reverse the Government policy in Ireland upon which the division was taken? Was he going to think Imperially with regard to this decision? If he proposed to ignore this decision he would not be following precedents.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member mistakes the position. It is not in the power of the Government to ignore the decision of the House, except by the reintroduction of the original Estimate. I hardly think it will be worth that, and therefore we shall acquiesce in the decision of the House.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) advised the Prime Minister to wire to Peckham.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he extremely regretted the defeat which His Majesty's Government had just sustained. All the free-fooders supported the Government in the lobby, and therefore he could only attribute the defeat of the Government to the abstention of those protectionists who ground them under their heel on Wednesday last. He trusted His Majesty's Government would now see what a broken reed these protectionists were to them in a moment of danger. What the right hon. Gentleman had said as to this being a binding decision of the House was quite true, because what had been voted was the reduced sum. This sum had been absolutely and completely voted, and not even on Report could the original sum be put in again. They could only do it by re-introducing the Estimate or another Estimate for £100, and he did not think the Government would consider it would be worth their while to do that. The only occasion upon which he ever marched up to the Table a winner was when, in conjunction with Mr. Hanbury, they reduced the salaries of the House of Lords by £500, and that amount had been saved to the country annually ever since. The present decision would be accepted, and he trusted this would be a lesson to the Government not to rely upon their protectionist friends in a moment of emergency, but rather turn to the gay and gallant and generous spirits who sat below the gangway, who, although they felt bound to express their convictions occasionally, when they found their friends drowning were ready to extend to them the straw. Under these circumstances, as the Government had accepted this economy of £100, he thought the Motion to report Progress might be withdrawn.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) asked how many defeats would the Government require before they resigned.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 146; Noes, 171. (Division List No. 55.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork N. E.)
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Athe[illegible] Jones, L.
Barr[illegible] (Cork, S.)
Bay[illegible] Thomas (Derbyshire)
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
ElliceCaptEC(S.Andrew's Bghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Evans,Sir Francis H(Maidstone
Farquharson, Dr. Robert

Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Gladstone Rt Hn.Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (Berwick)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife West)
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones David Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North.)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt.Hn.John(Montrose)
Murnaghan, George
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway N)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F.X. (Cork)
O'Brien Kendal(TipperaryMid)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Dowd John
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Perks, Robert William
Priestley, Arthur
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Reid, Sir R Threshie (Dumfries
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Roche, John
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer Rt.Hn.C R.(Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York W. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse SirJ.T.(Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captain Donelan.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Allhusen Augustus HenryEden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.Hugh O
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher Rt.Hon.Sir H.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey.)
Balfour RtHn.Gerald W(Leeds
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach Rt Hn Sir Michael Hicks
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles,Lt.-Col.H.F.(Middlesex
Bowles, T. Gibson(King's Lynn
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Campbell, Rt.Hn. J.A (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C. W.(Derbyshire
Chamberlain Rt.Hn.J.A.(Worc
Chapman, Edward
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davenport, William Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Rt.Hon.Sir John E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt.Hn. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fergusson Rt.Hn.Sir J.(Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
FitzGerald,Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster,Philip S.(Warwick S.W.
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Earnest
Garfit, William
Gordon,Hn.J.E. (Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon Maj Evans-(T'rH'mlets
Gore,Hn.G.R.C.Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Henry D.(Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.
Gretton, John
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords N W.
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hobhouse, RtHn.H(Somers'tE
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope,J. F.(Sheffield Brightside
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Artn[illegible] Fred.
Jessel, Captain Herber[illegible] tc-ton
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. [illegible] savılop
Kerr, John
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Awdrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (YorksNR
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage

Leveson-Gower, Frederick N S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol S.
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Maconochie, A. W.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Maxwell, Rt Hn. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh N.)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Peel, Hn Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Ridley, Hn. M.W. (Stalybridge
Ridley, S Forde (Bethnel Green
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild Hon. Lionel Walter
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edward Jas (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stone Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walround, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland - Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

CLASS VI.

2. £197,677 (Supplementary), Savings Banks' and Friendly Societies' Deficiencies.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said the deficiency in respect of trustee savings banks and friendly societies arose, according to the note on the Estimate, from the—

> "amounts by which the interest accrued in the year ended 20th November, 1903, from securities held by the National Debt Commissioners on account of the 'Fund for the Banks for Savings' and the 'Fund for Friendly Societies' was insufficient to meet the interest which the said Commissioners are obliged by statute to pay and credit to trustees of savings banks and to friendly societies."

The amount payable to trustee savings banks and friendly societies was 2¾ per cent. in order to enable them to pay a maximum interest of 2½ per cent. to the depositors. In the case of the Post Office Savings Bank the interest was also 2½ per cent. The deficiency was caused by expenses of management and the like. The Committee had had no opportunity really of discussing the matter on the Estimate itself because the deficiency could not be ascertained until the close of the year in respect of which the deficiency arose. He noticed that the original Estimate this year was merely a nominal sum, the amount being copied apparently from that of the preceding year with the full knowledge that the Estimate for the present year must be, as compared with previous years, completely different.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.) said the sum taken in the original Estimate this year was for the deficiency of the preceding year. The sum now asked was for the deficiency this year.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT said the original Estimate could not possibly provide for the real deficiency which would arise at the close of the year. His object in drawing attention to the matter was not to reduce the Vote, though he admitted that it showed a considerable increase on revious Estimates and one regretted always any increase in national expenditure. He ventured to say with some knowledge of the subject that savings banks were both directly and indirectly a source of saving to the State, that they prevented many who would otherwise be in that position from making any demand on the rates, and that they encouraged habits which were conducive to the welfare of the State, and were calculated to reduce the obligations likely to come upon it. The primary cause of the increase in the Vote was the automatic reduction in April last of the interest on Consols from 2¾ to 2½ per cent. A Select Committee considered this subject in 1902, and at that time there was another element of difficulty to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the abnormal price of Consols, which were then something like 113, 114, or 115. [Cries of "No."] At any rate they were at an abnormally high price. At the present time they might be taken, he hoped, to be abnormally low. In order to enable the House to form a judgment on the sums to be dealt with in this matter, he should like to draw attention to the number of deposit accounts and to the amount of the deposits in the savings banks, because not only had there been differences of opinion as to these matters, but he had recently read a leaflet which spoke of them in a way which, he thought, did not indicate the advantage they were to the nation. It depreciated both the amount and the consequences of our savings. The total number of deposit accounts was now 11,117,700. That was a very large proportion of the total population of the country, being nearly a quarter of the whole. It was, however, a much larger proportion of the adult population. The cash deposits amounted to £198,240,000, while in stock there was to the credit of the depositors £18,248,300. The total deposits were, therefore, no less than £216,488,300. He should like to add that as compared with Great Britain the statistics of the Irish banks were very nearly equally satisfactory. The deposits in the Irish savings banks had in the last twenty years increased from £4,000,000 to £12,000,000; and the number of depositors in the last fifteen years—for which alone he had figures—had increased from 186,000 to 451,000. These figures from an economic point of view were, to say the least, satisfactory and acceptable.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) asked what the hon. Member meant by satisfactory.

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT said the figures indicated the saving habits of the people, and he hoped, what they all hoped, the increasing prosperity of Ireland. He should say that the management of the banks both in Great Britain and Ireland, and their disposition to give facilities for saving, had materially improved. The increase in the number of depositors and the amount of depositors had been continuous at any rate since 1893. He should like to observe that previous to that year there was a period which for savings banks was marked by collapses, and that, worst of all crimes, a great deal of plunder of the poor. That had apparently ceased, because there had practially been no similar case since, and that was a change which justified the legislation of 1891. He thought that carried with it a tribute to the manner in which the hon. trustees and the managers of savings banks had readily comformed to the requirements of the Legislature. There was at first some little friction and difficulty, but he was bound to say that there had been a disposition to meet all the reasonable requirements of the Statute, to revise the rules, and to bring them up to date. Beyond some comparatively trivial cases of complaint which had generally been recognised, there was nothing but praise to give to those trustees and managers whose services, in his opinion, were a great national asset. Whatever might be said as to the value of the Post Office Savings Bank there was room for both these and the trustee banks, and he was sure that the facilities given by the latter were a source of great advantage to the country. The Act of 1891, instead of increasing, on the contrary, rather tended to stem the decrease of the deficiency by requiring more efficiency. The opening of banks was much more frequent, and branches were established in a large number of instances, bringing opportunities of saving to the poor. The cost of management had been reduced to a comparatively low point, and the interest had been raised in a large number of cases to the maximum. As the result of long observation, aided by expert opinion on the subject, he believed that the banks served substantially the classes which were in the contemplation of Parliament. The users of the banks were wage earners and domestic servants, and those classes who had no other opportunity of investing their savings. These were circumstances which made a claim on Parliament for this really economic expenditure. The leaflet to which he had referred had done an injustice to the savings banks, British and Irish, in comparing them to their disadvantage with the savings banks in other countries. In that leaflet Great

Britain was put at the bottom of the list, leading to the inference that thrift and saving were declining in this country; and that these qualities were promoted more thoroughly in other countries. There was no basis for these statistics when it was said that the British savings only amounted to £4 2s. 5¾d. per head of the population. He maintained that the figures should be £6 8s. 7¾d. The fact was these matters were incomparable. There could be no true comparison when there was such a diversity of conditions. Take the case of Prussia. In that country there was no general limitation either in the amount deposited or the amount to be deposited, and the conditions of deposit were most variable, being fixed by each locality and not by the central Government; and there were also lotteries, which were most attractive to business, but which were most derogatory to the principle of savings banks and disadvantageous to those who availed themselves of them. In Sweden, the maximum interest paid was something between 4 and 5 per cent., which placed that country outside the pale of comparison. Then in the United States the savings banks did a commercial business at the same time. Account must also be taken in this country of such institutions, not mentioned in the leaflet, as the Yorkshire Penny Savings Bank, which had £15,000,000 in deposits, and of benefit and building societies, whose contributions were only another form of thrift.

Another difficulty discussed in the Committee was the abnormal price at which Consols were at that time. That had disappeared for the moment and would probably do so for some period. Of course it was obvious that at the price Consols then were, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had a difficult problem to contend with. He spoke with diffidence, because the Committee had witnesses who assured them that the condition of affairs was likely to be more or less permanent. They were, however, indebted to the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, the right hon. Member for West Bristol, for having appointed the Committee over which he so ably presided, and for having given to it a great amount of time and thought in dealing with a very difficult and complex problem. Ultimately that Committee, after large discussion and some difference of opinion, arrived at the conclusion that the circumstances of the day demanded a reduction in the rate of interest paid by the State by one-eighth per cent. He was bound to add that that was, to some extent, a compromise; and in dealing with the matter and all its surrounding difficulties, there was no indisposition, but on the contrary, on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to recognise the economic result of these social institutions. But he submitted that circumstances had now materially changed, and these had modified the conclusions at which the Committee had arrived; and he had no doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer would see his way now not to press the lowering of the rate of interest—a change which, he believed, would be an economic and social disadvantage to a large number of the population, and would re-act very materially on our national character and habits. As a reason for not taking such a course, he would suggest that the time would come when the deficiency in the case of the trustee savings banks would be materially reduced. When the Annuity Act of 1880 had served its purpose, which would be in 1911, there would be a capital fund, once more bearing interest, which would make a large contribution towards the deficiency; and therefore he hoped that help would be given in tiding over the time when the House would not have to vote the large deficiency which at present existed. He consequently ventured to urge a reconsideration of the settlement of the programme under the altered circumstances, and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the interests of the banks and of the depositors, would now dispel, once for all, all uncertainty about this matter. He did so because the announcement in His Majesty's Speech last year led to a considerable withdrawal of a large number of deposits; and although there was no similar announcement this year, a cloud overhung the horizon, which was most oppressive not only to the management of the banks but deterrent to depositors, who cared not only for the safety of their deposits but for the interest to be paid them thereon. For those reasons, and also in acknowledgement of the honorary services of the trustees and managers, which were of great national value, he hoped that consideration would be given to this matter. He would repeat that the banks were of the greatest service to the country, and that it would be a most retrograde and unfortunate step if, in the absence of the necessities of the recent past, such a change as was proposed were made. He desired to say again to the Chairman of the Select Committee that for working the administrative reforms recommended by the Committee into shape they were all greatly indebted to him. He hoped that they would not only have a settlement of the question of interest, but that they would also have administrative improvements which would make the work easier, better, and less onerous on the part of trustees and managers.

Mr. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.) said that as the manager of one of the largest trustee savings banks in London he should like to join in the appeal to the Treasury to take no steps whatever in the direction of reducing the interest on the money invested in the savings banks. He submitted to the present Chancellor of the Exchequer that he, of all men, could not propose, on economic grounds, to reduce the rate of interest on those small deposits. During the present session they had heard again and again from the Prime Minister denunciation of the policy of *laisser faire.* The reduction of the statutory rate of interest on deposits in the savings banks would be resorting to a policy of *laisser faire.* He submitted to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he should not adopt that doctrine, which would not be in consonance with his own view, or in consonance with the interests of the country. The right hon. Gentleman should do all he could to foster those banks by enabling them pay more interest than would be paid if the money were invested in the open market, even if the cost of the deficit were to be paid by this House. Two or three years ago the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol brought the matter before the House. At that time the right hon. Gentleman's difficulties were exceptionally great. He had to face the investment of money supplied by those savings banks year by year in proper, sound, trustee funds, principally Consols, and he was in exceeding difficulty, because Consols were at that time particularly high. That difficulty had, however, now passed away. Consols did not stand as high now as they did then; and, therefore, the only factor in the problem which remained to be discussed was whether or not a higher rate of interest should be paid to depositors in those banks, in order to encourage action on the part of subjects of the King which would be not only good for them but which would be good for the country as a whole, at a slight additional cost. He submitted that the question should not be argued on a purely economic basis. Those banks were to encourage people in this country; they were to encourage thrift among the working classes, which was by no means exhausted; and, in that respect, he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not be deceived by the leaflet which had been circulated. That leaflet showed that, in spite of the efforts of the Treasury and the labours of philanthropic persons to encourage thrift, deposits were smaller per head in this country, and smaller, on the whole, than in most other countries. It said that £4 2s. 6d. represented the investments per head in this country. In Denmark, however, the amount exceeded £10, and it decreased for various countries, leaving England at the bottom of the list. His hon. friend had pointed out some of the fallacies which underlay a comparison in this matter between England and some other countries. In some other countries there was no maximum per annum, and no total maximum, and there were not so many ways of investment as there were in this country. In the countries to which the leaflet referred, trustee or private savings banks, building societies, friendly societies, co-operative societies, and trades union accumulation of funds had not attained to anything like the scope and extent they had in this country. Therefore any comparison was unreliable and wholly fallacious; and he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not attach importance to it such as might lead him to propose that interest on deposits in those banks should be reduced. They ought to continue to encourage, even at the cost of a few thousands, or a few hundred of thousands, per annum, the deposits in savings banks by the class of people who used them. Every care was taken that those deposits did not interfere with the ordinary course of business by other banks. A great deal of good had been done in the past by the system, and he hoped it would continue for many years.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said he did not suppose that anyone would think for a moment that he was not keenly interested in savings banks, and in their success. He had spent a great many years of his life in the promotion of thrift, and he had striven in every way he could to encourage those banks. He agreed with his hon. friend that the exercise of thrift very largely depended on the facilities which were afforded for its exercise. If the facilities were increased, and if people were put in the way of depositing their money, and, above all, if the deposits were readily withdrawable without friction or trouble, then he was sure they would encourage the habit of thrift throughout the country. He thought that the savings banks had achieved an incalculable amount of good. They stimulated thrift and made people see the value of small savings, and he believed that the Savings Bank Act was one of the most beneficial ever passed. He should like to say a few words on the problem they were now discussing. Of course, it was extremely easy and extremely pleasant to say that they did not want to reduce the interest, that it was very desirable it should be increased, and so on; but he would ask the Committee to consider what would be the practical effect of supplementing by taxation the interest that was earned. That was really the question. He was quite sure that if Mr. Gladstone had been asked, when the savings banks were established, whether money should be voted to supplement the interest earned by deposits he would have been the very first to object. The principle was that the banks should be carried on as a business undertaking and that the State should guarantee its security, the great element being that the security should be absolute. That was now assured; and he ventured to say, as one who had given the matter great personal attention, that the amount of interest payable to the depositors was quite a secondary matter. He did not say it was not an important matter, because it was, but the great question was that the money should be saved. The £250,000 they were now asked to vote represented just one-eighth per cent. on the money invested. That was to say that they were to give 2s. 6d. per cent. more to every depositor in a savings bank who had deposited £100 for a whole year than that amount would fairly earn in the market. He did not say that 2s. 6d. per cent. was not a consideration, but he wished to ask whether it was the first consideration to the comparatively few men who had £100 in the Post Office for a year as compared with the other advantages offered by the Post Office. The maximum holding was £200; and, therefore, the maximum grant that could be given to any individual was 5s. Was it desirable that they should take away the self-supporting and independent character of those banks when the maximum amount any individual could get was 5s.? But the average holding was under £20. That meant only an extra 6d. His experience was that if they desired to foster thrift it was the smallest men who should be encouraged. He had always found that the difficulty lay in the beginning in inducing a man to pay in the first sixpence. When that habit had been acquired the rest was easy. But he did not believe that to tell such a man that when he had saved £100 he would get £2 10s. a year instead of £2 7s. 6d. would have any influence on him whatever.

The great work of these institutions was to promote thrift in the beginning and persuade them to pay small sums into the bank, but he looked with some alarm at this sum of £250,000 to supplement the savings bank interest. Although he desired to see the utmost amount of interest paid to the depositors, he thought the very small increase they were giving would not promote thrift. It seemed to him that these institutions should be carried on in such a way as not to cast additional burdens on the State. There was a danger of a reaction setting in if they increased taxation for this purpose. It was not reasonable that a man who had saved £200 should have 5s. given to him out of taxation, and to the small depositors having £8 to £10 in the bank the difference would be absolutely nothing. It was far better to inculcate the idea that these banks should be carried on on business lines, and that no burden should be thrown on the State although the State gave every security. Although he could not object to the present Vote, he urged upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer the necessity of these banks in aid of thrift being made self-supporting institutions. When Mr. Gladstone fixed the rate of interest at 2½ per cent., Consols were at 95 and paying 3 per cent., and there was an ample margin of profit in carrying on these institutions, and although the country had benefited largely by the large sum deposited, still it was never the intention of the founders of these institutions that they should form a charge on the State. That was most emphatically the view of Mr. Gladstone, who fixed the interest at 2½ per cent., and it was a wise view, because it was an encouragement to the men who had large holdings to draw their money and put it into Consols, so that they might obtain a greater amount of interest on it, and if that were done that was a good step in the right direction. It was, therefore, desirable to regulate the interest fairly and liberally, but at such a rate as to give inducements to persons with holdings of £100 and £200 to withdraw their money from the bank and put it in Consols. It was for these reasons that he had made the remarks he had. His desire was to treat the depositor generously, but looking at this matter from a larger point of view, he thought, in the interests of the country, it was not wise of them to build up a great rate of interest at the expense of the taxpayers, but that these banks should be carried on in a business-like way, as was originally intended by their founder.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) said they were discussing a matter of very great interest, not so much with regard to the amendment involved, but as to the principle. They all agreed that these trustee savings banks were very useful, and they all hoped they would go on and prosper in the future. The point before the Committee was surely whether the taxpayers of this country were to be called upon to pay artificially, a rate of interest which the depositors of the savings banks enjoyed. At the moment there was a statutory obligation upon them and they must take the obligation upon themselves, there being no option. But he would be very glad to learn from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol or the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had given a great deal of attention to this matter, what their opinions were upon the whole subject. Of course the present Chancellor of the Exchequer had entered into his high office under circumstances of exceptional difficulty, and he had not had quite the experience which his predecessors had enjoyed. He himself (Mr. Ellis) took very much the same view as the hon. Member for North Islington. He had listened almost with amusement to the speech of his hon. friend the Member for West Nottingham, and to the cavalier way in which he talked about it being a matter of only a few hundred thousand pounds. The time was coming when they would have to scrutinise very carefully items of one or two hundred thousand pounds. Besides that, it was rather placing the matter upon a sentimental basis. He took the view that those banks should be self-supporting institutions, and he believed that thrift would be very much better promoted by teaching men exactly where they stood. They should not have an artificial rate of interest beyond what the money would earn, by means of that small Vote. He would therefore urge the Chancellor of the Exchequer, so far as he could, to take a severer view than had hitherto been taken on this matter. He felt that the time was coming when the whole subject must be overhauled. They ought no longer to go on burdening the taxpayers with those grants, and he had yet to hear any good reason why they should be called upon, year after year, to vote money for that particular purpose.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN explained that as this was a Vote to make good deficiences arising on the savings bank account, it obviously could not be framed until the savings bank year was closed and the amount of the deficiencies were known. Those deficiencies could be made good either by a Supplementary Estimate in the current financial year or by an original Estimate in the next financial year. The original Estimate this year was for the deficiency in the last savings bank year, but, being desirous that the question should come before the Committee as early as possible this session, in view of the fact that upon the views expressed by the House depended the decision of the Treasury as to the future rate of interest to be paid on savings bank deposits, he had brought in as a Supplementary Estimate this year the Vote which might have been introduced as an original Estimate next year. He hoped that that explanation would satisfy the hon. Member for West Islington that there had not been any loose or reckless estimating. As the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division had rightly said, the Committee had no alternative but to vote this money. They were bound by Statute to pay a certain rate of interest, and this Vote was merely to enable that statutory obligation to be fulfilled. The question the Committee had really to consider was whether they ought to continue to make good the deficiencies on these accounts, or whether the rate of interest allowed to depositors ought not to be so altered as to eliminate the necessity for future Grants in Aid. The difficulty had arisen in its present form in consequence of the reduction of the rate of interest on Consols. The difficulty was foreseen by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, at whose instance, in March, 1902, there was appointed a Select Committee which had presented a valuable Report on the subject. With regard to trustee banks, the Committee pointed out that in only six years between 1876 and 1901 had there been a surplus on their income account, and that the total net deficit which had had to be made good by the taxpayers during that period amounted to £503,615. In the same years, however, the Post Office Savings Bank had paid to the Exchequer a net surplus of no less than £1,601,285. Against this had to be set the deficiency of the trustee banks to which he had referred, and the Deficiency Annuity, established in 1880, to run for twenty-seven years, for the purpose of making good the deficiency on the capital of the savings banks caused by their income having been insufficient in their earlier stages to pay the interest directed by Parliament, and by their having had to spend capital to pay that interest. The result during those six years was to leave a net charge on the taxpayers of £617,000. The Committee pointed out that owing to the increase in the maximum sum which any person was permitted to deposit in a given year, from £30 to £50, and to the great cheapness of money, the total deposits were exceptionally large in the years from 1894 to 1897, while the price of Consols was abnormally high. For instance, the increase of the balance due to depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank, which between 1888 and 1892 had averaged from £4,000,000 to £4,500,000 a year, rose in 1894 and 1895 to £8,500,000 in each year, and in 1896 it actually exceeded £10,000,000; and the Committee then proceeded—

> For this reason and because of the gradual extinction of loans made at comparatively high rates, the rates of interest earned by the Commissioners' investments fell from £3 0s. 9d. in 1887 to £2 15s. 2d. in 1901. Of these investments, £19,284,606, on behalf of trustee savings banks, and £64,915,818 on behalf of Post Office Savings banks, were on 31st May, 1902, in Consols"—

the rate of interest on which was reduced from 2¾ to 2½ per cent. from 5th April last year—

> "and the loss on this, together with a similar loss on the amounts of Consols which remains to be replaced by terminable annuities will involve an annual loss of income to the trustee banks of £67,500, and to the Post Office banks of £181,000."

The Committee also estimated the financial effect of this loss upon the income account of the two funds for the next six years, their anticipations, briefly stated, being that on trustee banks there would be a deficiency in 1903 of £85,735 rising to £128,479 in 1907, and then falling again to £85,862 in 1908, as the interest on the fund accumulated by the Deficiency Annuity was set free for income account, and rising subsequently as deposits increased; and that on Post Office Savings Banks there would be a deficiency in 1903 of £136,811, rising to £237,133 in 1908, and continuing to increase thereafter. That was the serious prospect which the Committee had to face. The figures were calculated upon the assumption that certain amounts of new money would be placed on deposit in these banks every year, and that interest would be attainable on all new deposits at the rate of 2⅝ per cent. The Committee then went on to state—

> "It may be observed that such a rate could not be obtained from Consols which stood at 96 on 16th July, 1902, unless they were purchased at an average rate of 95¼, and that Mr. Daniell, the broker of the National Debt Commissioners, is doubtful whether it can be safely anticipated;"

and on the facts before them the Committee suggested that unless something was done the deficiencies to which he had referred might actually be exceeded.

Under these circumstances the Committee set to work to consider what might be done. They examined and rejected various proposals which had been made, and which were set forth in the Committee's Report. They considered and rejected the suggestion that the area of investments should be enlarged. They examined into the question of the expenses of management, and decided that the expenses were very moderate, and could not be further reduced—a view with which all who had watched the transactions with the banks would agree. They also considered whether there was any force in the contention which had been put forward in the course of the debate to some extent by the hon. Member for South Islington, and in a more uncompromising form by the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division. The Committee were of opinion that what the depositors mainly had regard to was the security for their money and the readiness with which it could be made available when required, and they gave reasons for not believing that a trifling reduction in the rate of interest would seriously discourage thrift. In this matter he was wholly of the opinion of the hon. Member for North Islington, that if they desired to encourage thrift it was at the beginning that the encouragement was most important. Whilst he agreed with the promotion of thrift as a matter of great national importance, both from a social and political point of view, he was bound to say that he did not think the subsidising of these trustee or Post Office savings banks was the best way to promote thrift, even if money was available for the purpose of promoting thrift. It was not the best way, because it might be withdrawn at any moment. A good deal might be said for assisting people to make provision for illness and old age, but they had no kind of security that the money would be reserved for those conditions, for it might be withdrawn at any moment. He thought it was a great mistake to assume that the money in these banks was wholly the money of poor people. On the contrary, a great part of it was the money of the well-to-do, who had taken advantage of the raising of the amount that might be deposited in one year. In the course of 1903 there was an increase of less than £100,000 in the case of trustee banks as compared with an annual increase of £500,000, which the Committee presided over by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol thought it fair to take as the basis of the calculation, and the money due to the depositors in the Post Office Banks increased by £1,395,000 in the same year, as against an increase when securities fell, and money was cheap, in one year of £10,000,000.

*Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) asked if the right hon. Gentleman would give the number of depositors?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he could not, but that had no bearing on his figures.

*Mr. McCRAE: But that is an important point.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said it did not matter from his point of view whether the money was deposited by a great or a small number of people.

*Mr. McCRAE thought the number had a great bearing upon the point as to whether the poorer classes were continuing to deposit or not.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he did not doubt that fewer people were continuing to put money in the savings banks. What he stated was that the money in the savings banks was by no means confined to the poor people. Hon. Members had quoted from a pamphlet which compared the amount of savings per head in savings banks in this country with foreign countries. He did not think simple comparisons of that kind led to any satisfactory results as to the state of the prosperity of the people, because they left out of consideration a great number of circumstances which must be considered before any fair conclusion could be drawn from them. He had put before the Committee the state of affairs as foreshadowed by the Select Committee, and he had told the Committee of the remedies for that state of affairs which the Select Committee had examined and rejected. Having rejected their alternatives the Committee proceeded—

"For these reasons they consider that such a reduction in the rate of interest to depositors in savings banks as would suffice to meet the deficits that may be caused by the fall in the interest on Consols might be carried out without diminishing the inducements to thrift or injuring the trustee savings banks."

They estimated the sum required for the reduction at one-eighth per cent. (assuming the amount of earnings of new money for the next six years to be as already given), provided that certain other charges were made. This would turn the deficiency previously anticipated into a small surplus and place them in a solvent position independent of any annual grant from Parliament. The expenses of management were moderate and could not be reduced. The legislation which they recommended was not carried through, but he thought everyone would desire to see it carried and he intended to introduce a Bill to deal with it. The Committee recommended—

"(1) That the income of the Trustee Banks Fund should be increased by the interest on the securities purchased by the Deficiency Annuity, the annuity being extended for about ten years in consequence.

"(2) That the expenses of the Post Office Savings Banks should be diminished by making the entry in the depositors' pass book a legal acknowledgment by the Postmaster-General of the receipt of deposits under £1, the Central Office ceasing to send an acknowledgment by post to the depositor.

"(3) That both trustee and Post Office banks should be relieved of the obligation to send a notice to depositors whose balance exceeds £200, that such balance will be invested in Government stock unless otherwise directed, the balance being allowed to remain without earning interest until the depositor otherwise directs."

As to these three recommendations he thought there would probably be no difference of opinion, and he hoped they might be treated in a non-controversial spirit. The proposal for a reduction in the rate of interest was more contentious and more likely to give rise to debate in the House. He had already expressed the opinion that there ought not to continue, as a permanent condition of affairs, a state of things in which the taxpayer had annually to vote a Grant in Aid on account of these funds to make good the difference between the interest that was paid to the depositors and the interest which the State was able to earn by investing the depositor's money. The question arose whether that was going to be permanently the condition of things or was it merely a temporary state of affairs which was diminishing year by year and which might possibly, within a reasonable time, pass away altogether. The Select Committee said it would be impossible to anticipate that it would be otherwise than permanent, but circumstances had changed very materially. Consols were now about 86¾ and were not likely to see a great rise. But that was not all. It was perfectly clear now that all the new money in the savings banks could be invested so as to pay certainly 3 per cent. or over in annuities under loans, local loans, stock, etc. They had to provide a considerable amount of terminable annuities which formed a very satisfactory investment, and he thought that for the next six years there were good prospects for all new money paying 3 per cent. Under these circumstances he had had the calculations of the Select Committee remade. They had been able to invest their money already on better terms than the Committee thought possible. The result of the recalculation was to show that in 1903 the deficiency on trustee savings banks account was £76,000 instead of £85,000, as anticipated by the Select Committee, and on the Post Office banks £108,000 odd, instead of nearly £137,000. That was to say that on the two funds they were nearly £38,000 less badly off than the Select Committee anticipated, and in future years he anticipated no difficulty in investing new money at 3 per cent.

Mr. LOUGH: Will that be a progressive increase?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the hon. Gentleman would perhaps have patience and allow him to pursue his argument. In order to make it clear he must be allowed to state the considerations which the Committee would have to bear in mind. The Select Committee's calculation was based on the rate at which they could invest new money and the amount of new money which would be received. He anticipated no difficulty in getting a higher rate on the new money; but, on the other hand, he did not think it safe to allow for as much money as the Committee thought it reasonable to anticipate. They made their calculation on the supposition that new money in trustees' banks would increase by £500,000 a year and Post Office banks by £2,000,000 in 1902 and 1903, by £2,500,000 in 1904 and 1905, and by £3,000,000 in each subsequent year. Any estimate of this kind was very speculative, and, as a matter of fact, the actual increase in 1902 in trustees' banks was £643,585 and in Post Office banks £4,212,172. In 1903 the increase in trustees' bank was £93,479 and in Post Office banks £1,394,912. So that it was more than the Select Committee estimated in each case in 1902 and less than they estimated in each case in 1903. This year there had been special circumstances to induce withdrawals or to cause money to be invested elsewhere owing to the great cheapness of high-class securities and in the extent to which municipalities were taking money on deposit—not, he thought, an altogether commendable proceeding. Under all the circumstances he had recalculated the deficiencies on the assumption that the present rate of interest was maintained to depositors and that new money was invested at 3 per cent. On this assumption a deficiency on trustee banks would be £95,000 in 1904, would fall to £11,000 in 1905, to £2,000 in 1907, and by 1908 would have rounded the corner and would have become a surplus of £3,000; and that in the case of Post Office banks the deficiency would be £118,000 in 1904, and would fall in the course of six years to £71,000. The Committee would see that these figures were much more favourable than the anticipations which were placed before the Select Committee. Of course, the doubtful element in the calculation was the amount of new money they were going to receive. In taking the figure for the two banks at the average of £1,500,000 a year he had been, he thought, rather under-sanguine than over-sanguine; and, though he admitted it was pure speculation, and he had no right to speak with any authority, if he had been under-sanguine the figures of the accounts would be even more favourable and the deficiency would be still further and more quickly reduced than he had anticipated. Under all these circumstances, and after giving the matter the most anxious consideration he could, he had come to the conclusion that he would not be justified in proposing, under these entirely altered conditions and with entirely different prospects now, to reduce the rate of interest paid to depositors. He repeated his concurrence with the Committee and with his right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol that they were not called upon permanently to subsidise these banks or permanently to pay the depositors a rate of interest which the Government could not earn themselves. But he thought it would be admitted that they ought not, especially when they had regard to the large surplus paid into the Exchequer on account of Post Office savings banks during many years, to lower the rate of interest unless there was a permanent necessity for doing so. They ought not to do it merely upon a temporary difficulty, and that argument would be strengthened when he reminded the Committee that the lowest reduction they could make, one-eighth, would even in the first year take from the depositors more money than they needed to balance the accounts, and in every subsequent year a great deal more than was needed. Under all these circumstances, he had come to the conclusion that, while it was necessary for the Government to introduce a Bill in order to carry out the other recommendations of the Select Committee, it was not his intention to propose any reduction in the rate of interest. He hoped that, in the altered circumstances, the deficiency would be rapidly reduced, and that before very long it might be altogether abolished. When the Bill came before the House he hoped he should have the general support of Members on both sides.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.) said he desired to congratulate his right hon. friend on the extremely clear and able statement he had just made to the Committee, and he thought there would be general satisfaction with the attention which he had devoted to a difficult and complicated, but most important, subject. Two years ago this subject gave him very great anxiety as Chancellor of the Exchequer. He felt that the income of both classes of savings banks would be reduced by something like £250,000 in April, 1903, by the reduction of the rate of interest on Consols, in which so much of the money of the depositors in those banks had necessarily been invested. The calculations of the Select Committee were based on the best evidence that was obtainable from the experts at the Treasury and the National Debt Office, from the Government broker, and from other sources as to the probabilities of the future in this matter. Any one could see now that those expectations had been entirely falsified. He hoped the expectations of his right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer might be more fortunate for the benefit of the savings banks, though whether that would be a fortunate thing for the country, when Consols were standing at such a figure as 86½, was a matter on which a good deal might be said from different points of view. To-day, however, they were only dealing with the position of the savings banks. He wished to dissociate himself as strongly as he could from the doctrine laid down by the hon. Member for Nottingham that these banks ought to be subsidised by the State. They were a great advantage to the country, but they were, after all, only one form of thrift, and he did not think it was a form of thrift that ought to be subsidised. He did not think the taxpayers should be called upon to bolster up the rate of interest paid to the depositors in this class of banks beyond the point which their deposits could earn when properly and safely invested on behalf of the taxpayers in whose hands they were placed as bankers, and not as trustees. Therefore, if he thought that the prospects held out by the evidence taken by the Committee, and summarised in their report, were likely to be fulfilled, he could not agree with the decision of his right hon. friend not to reduce the rate of interest as the Committee recommended. But he must frankly say, having presided over that Select Committee, and having devoted very great care and attention to the matter, that, if they had known, if they could have foreseen, what had actually happened in this matter, he did not think they would have arrived at the recommendation to reduce the rate of interest by one-eighth per cent. His right hon. friend, in his closing remarks, had given a very strong argument against any such proposal at the present time. One-eighth per cent. did not seem much, but one-eighth per cent. on the enormous amounts of deposits that were held by the State in behalf of the depositors in connection with these banks came to a very large annual sum; and to reduce the rate of interest paid to these depositors by a sum which was obviously greater than the loss which, in a few years to come, it was probable the taxpayers would sustain by paying the present rate of interest, would, to his mind, be a policy which would not be justified.

He did not wish to quote any of the figures which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had placed before the Committee in regard to the calculation of what was likely to happen in the future. That right hon. Gentleman, of course, had gone to the best authorities—he had no doubt gone to precisely the same authorities as had been drawn upon by the Committee. He did not wish, he had no right, to question these authorities or the calculations and estimates of the position at which the right hon. Gentleman had arrived with the best advice at his command; but he could only say—and this was the sole object with which he addressed the Committee—that he thought the right hon. Gentleman was justified in the conclusion at which he had arrived, that he did not intend, in the present session, to reduce the rate of interest. But he hoped his right hon. friend, should he remain long enough in his office, would keep this question in his mind. He was glad to hear his right hon. friend state strongly his opinion that the depositors ought not to be subsidised at the cost of the taxpayers; and should the right hon. Gentleman occupy his present position next year, and should he find at that time that his calculations, either as to the price of Consols or the new money which the savings banks would receive, had been falsified, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would have the courage to come down to the House and state that he proposed to decrease the interest, although that day he had held his hand in the interests of the depositors. He himself did not doubt that there were two sides to this question of the position of the depositors in the savings banks. No doubt a very large number—a large majority—consisted of the very class for whom the savings banks were intended. No doubt those banks did an enormously valuable work in promoting the beginning of thrift; but they were also used—especially the trustee banks, in connection with which his right hon. friend the Member for Islington, had taken such an active part—as a mere means of investment by not a few persons who were perfectly capable of looking after their own affairs, and who did not want to be urged to thrift, or to any inducement to thrift. That had been absolutely proved, as was manifest to anybody who looked at the Report of the Committee, by the fact that when the rate of interest had been for a time increased, or when either through investments in corporation securities, or in any other way, they were able to obtain a better interest for their money, there had been large withdrawals from the savings banks in order that such investments might be made. He believed it was largely due to that fact that less money had gone into the savings banks in the last few years than in previous years, when the rate of interest was very low in the country. But there was another reason. He was afraid that all of them had not as much money as they had some years ago; and he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would consider that matter also, and likewise consider whether from the decrease in new investments in the savings banks he might not learn lessons, in the future, of economy in national expenditure.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he need only offer a few words on this matter. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had made out a perfectly unanswerable case for not dealing with the question at this moment. Under present conditions, and looking to the short future, the deficiency to fall on the taxpayers would not be equal to any reduction that might be made on the interest, and therefore the reduction on interest would be to the profit of the taxpayers at the expense of the depositors. But he was bound to say that he thought the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was very depressing indeed, when the right hon. Gentleman stated that the average deposits in the savings banks were not increased in the proportion he had hoped. The right hon. Gentleman had based his figures on a low estimate of the new money to be deposited; and the right hon. Gentleman said that if the deposits were decreased he would be able to make a larger profit. He had heard with considerable alarm that the right hon. Gentleman had based that estimate on the suspicion that the price of Consols would be very low for some years to come. He desired to enforce what had fallen from the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, the right hon. Member for West Bristol, that they ought to look to any Government in office to turn their principal attention to the question of national economy, so that the burden of taxation on the people should be relieved. He believed the present Chancellor of the Exchequer could have done nothing else than he had promised to do; although the Committee could have come to no other conclusion than that at which they arrived, in the circumstances under which they met. Unfortunately the circumstances were now different, because they (the Committee) based their Report on the then price of Consols, and the limited area of investments. The only good which had arisen out of the present financial condition was that investors in the savings banks would be able to receive their current rate of interest for some time to come.

*Mr. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley) said he was glad the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not see any necessity for lowering the rate of interest in the saving banks. This decision would be received with great satisfaction indeed in his constituency. He was glad the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, although he did not agree entirely in all the present Chancellor had stated, confirmed what he had said as to the grounds on which he looked at this question. Circumstances which had arisen had no doubt given a large amount of anxiety to those gentlemen who took an interest in this subject; for it appeared that if a lower rate of interest was obtained from Government securities it would not be possible that small investors could receive the same rate of interest as at present, and something would have to be done. Happily, they were saved at the present time from that position, by virtue of having dear money. They must bear in mind that they were dealing, in connection with these banks, with the poorer class of people, and it would be a great satisfaction to them to think that they could make their investments with confidence, believing they had the power of the Government behind them. There were other savings banks besides the banks they were now considering. He himself knew a local savings bank with an accumulated capital of £13,000,000. It paid a fair rate of interest but its investments were of a very different kind to the investments of the Post Office Savings Bank. He was rather surprised that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should not have suggested that the Commission might consider the question of extending the area of the investments of the Post Office Savings Bank. As far as the large number of people who were saving money in small sums were concerned, it was a matter of the greatest importance that they should have confidence in the savings banks; and as long as the investments remained as they were that confidence would be maintained.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he trusted that the Committee or Chancellor of the Exchequer would not entertain the idea of extending the area of the investments of the savings banks. The principal if, not the only, thing that a depositor in the savings banks looked to was the safety of his money. The rate of interest was a secondary matter. What the depositor wanted was to feel that the strong box into which he put his money was strong; and it would be most unsafe and, in his opinion, most improper for a State savings bank to extend the area of its investments beyond the limits already reached. In his opinion, those limits were already too large and he was in favour of reducing them rather than increasing them. As to the manner in which the savings banks were to be treated, he confessed he was still of opinion that the recommendations of the Committee were sound. The ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer admitted that the circumstances were now so changed that the recommendations were not at present fully applicable. He did not agree, he thought on the whole that the views of the Committee were founded on considerations which were likely to be permanent; and they were more likely to be sound than the views of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. He supposed the right hon. Gentleman derived his information from the Government broker, who had already shown himself not quite certain in his predictions. His own opinion was that whatever happened the State ought not to pay any considerable amount for the upkeep of savings banks. He passed from that to what he considered to be rather a serious feature in the Estimates. He did not know whether the Committee realised that they were now asked to pay two years deficits in one year on the trustee savings banks and the friendly societies. In the present year's Estimates, a sum of £48,619 was taken for trustee savings banks and friendly societies. Now they were asked to vote in the same financial year a further sum of £76,287 for the trustee savings banks and £13,003 for the friendly societies. Consequently they had in the same year one year's deficiency on the Estimates and another year's deficiency as a Supplementary Estimate. He thought the right way would be to put the deficiency either on the year's Estimates or to leave it out of the year's Estimates and put it on the Supplementary Estimates. His opinion was that it ought to be put on the year's Estimates, because, firstly, he was dead opposed to Supplementary Estimates of any kind; and, secondly, because he did not think the reason assigned for putting it on the

Supplementary Estimates was sufficient. That reason was that they could not exactly ascertain the precise amount of the deficiency until after the Estimates had been made up. But an attempt in that direction was made last year, and he did not think it was very far out. They had no explanation as to why they were now asked to provide two years deficiencies in one year.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he gave a full explanation on the point but the hon. Gentleman was not in his place. He came in later.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he was very sorry that he missed the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman, and he only trusted it was satisfactory. Certainly as a general rule it could not be right to put two years charges into one year's Estimates, and he hoped in future that the deficiency would be put either in the year's Estimates or in the Supplementary Estimates.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said he was present when the Chancellor of the Exchequer made his explanation; but the right hon. Gentleman's justification was confined to his action in bringing forward the Supplementary Estimate. The right hon. gentleman said that it was for the convenience of the House that the matter should be considered at the present time, possibly with a view to legislation; but the right hon. Gentleman did not make any attempt to deal with the point raised by the hon. Gentleman the Member for King's Lynn as to why the Committee was asked to vote services for two years in one Supplementary Estimate. As regarded the ensuing year he observed that there was no Estimate for this purpose. That might be the natural consequence of the fact that they were now voting services for two years in one Supplementary Estimate. It was another instance of the way in which the Estimates were introduced. It led to confusion both at the moment and in the future when any comparison of expenditure over a series of years was attempted. The Estimate before the Committee was put down under Class 7 although it should be under Class 6. He assumed that was a misprint.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.) said it was a misprint. His attention had been called to it.

MR. BUCHANAN said, as far as he could gather from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, there would undoubtedly be a deficiency in the ensuing year and for several years to come. Surely, the right hon. Gentleman ought to be able to give an Estimate.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said, as far as he knew, an Estimate had never been presented to the House of Commons until after the savings bank year had ended. Then an Estimate was presented for the sum required to make good the deficiency during the savings bank year. Therefore it was only possible to make provision for the deficiency within the current financial year by means of a Supplementary Estimate or by an original Estimate at the beginning of the next financial year. If the hon. Gentleman wanted a sum to appear on the original Estimates next year it would be the sum he was now asking for. It had been the practice during the whole of the time that his right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol was Chancellor of the Exchequer and during the whole of the time that he was Secretary of the Treasury to provide the sum by a Supplementary Estimate. He thought it desirable to bring the matter before the House at the earliest opportunity.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH explained that when he came into office he found it was the practice to take the Vote for the deficit of the trustee savings bank—in those days there was no deficit in the Post Office Savings Bank—in the original Estimates of the year; but as it was impossible to tell the actual result until the close of the savings bank financial year he gave directions to have the Vote for the purpose included in the Supplementary Estimates, and that had been done during the time he was Chancellor of the Exchequer. For some reason which he could not understand that practice had not been followed last year.

MR. BUCHANAN said he quite understood, but he still maintained that they ought not to be asked to vote the two items in one year. The advantage of the practice adopted by the right hon. Gentleman to himself was plain. The right hon. Gentleman saved in the Estimate £250,000. He was glad to be assured that there was no immediate urgency for the reduction of the interest, and that it was possible by a temporary measure to avoid it in the immediate future. As he understood, the 2½ per cent. interest was guaranteed by the Government, for no particular fixed term, and it being a Government guarantee could not be altered until altered by Parliament.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he proposed to revert to the practice of his right hon. friend, which he thought the wiser course, Why it had not been followed last year he was unable to explain.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not extend the investments in savings bank securities. Depositors in savings banks desired two things—security for their money, and power to be able to realise their deposits at any moment. If the savings banks were allowed to extend their investments in order to obtain a higher rate of interest they might find it difficult to realise when they desired to, with the result that the depositor might be unable for a long time to withdraw his money.

MR. AINSWORTH (Argyll) threw out for the consideration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer the suggestion that when a depositor's account in the Post Office Savings Bank reached £100 everything over and above that amount should be automatically invested in Consols in the name of the depositor. Such a system, he thought, would mean a saving to the ratepayers.

*SIR EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter) congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer in having come to what he considered was a wise decision. In a matter of this kind it was extremely difficult to foresee what a few years would bring forth. Throughout the world there had been a fall in the level of all first-class securities, and it was highly probable that in a few years, instead of showing a deficit, the Post Office Savings Bank account would show a surplus. He objected to the criticism of the Vote as something in the nature of a subsidy. This payment of interest was a guarantee by Act of Parliament. Even if it were a subsidy there was no purpose for which he would sooner vote money than to encourage thrift among the working classes. [Hear, hear!] As sums like £20,000,000 sterling were voted freely for non-remunerative purposes, it seemed somewhat pedantic to criticise in a tone of virtuous indignation a Vote of £150,000 or £200,000 which might possibly lead to a considerable increase in national thrift, and, as a consequence, to a considerable increase in national wealth. There was a lack of preparation in such an attitude. A further point in respect of which these banks were entitled to consideration at the hands of the Treasury was that they had been very good clients in the past. Not only had the rate of interest been less than the rate at which money could be raised elsewhere, but the large sum in the hands of the Government had greatly facilitated the operations of the Treasury in respect of Debt Commissioners. For these reasons he would be sorry to see too niggardly a spirit displayed by the Treasury towards depositors in the various savings banks.

MR. LOUGH said that in this matter the Chancellor of the Exchequer was following a course which for seven years past he had strenously advocated in the face of much opposition. The whole of the agitation in favour of reducing the rate of interest arose from the cheapness of money during certain years, and his contention had always been that in a matter of so much importance they ought to take, not the experience of a few years, but the experience of the whole country over a long period. He entirely agreed with the decision at which the right hon. Gentleman had arrived. The other recommendations of the Committee were most reasonable, and everybody would agree as to the desirability of carrying them into effect, but any proposal to reduce the rate of interest would be received with great displeasure in the country. It should not be forgotten that with a population of 40,000,000 or 42,000,000, there were more than 11,000,000 depositors in these banks; and that consequently, if any deficiency had to be made good, these 11,000,000 depositors would bear a large share of taxation, so that it was merely putting money into one pocket and taking it out of the other. The Estimate itself, however, he regarded as very unsatisfactory, and no good reason had been given for the form in which it was presented. He desired to know whether the note at the bottom was strictly accurate—that the Estimate provided for the deficit only to 30th November, in the case of the friendly societies, and to 31st December in the case of the savings banks.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN explained that the Estimate was to make good the deficiencies for the last completed year of each class of bank. Their respective financial years ended on the dates given.

Mr. LOUGH contended that it was not a satisfactory Estimate to deal with. The Estimates were supposed to be for the expenditure of the State for the year ending 31st March.

***The CHAIRMAN** pointed out that the point to which the hon. Member was referring had been already fully discussed.

Mr. LOUGH said he had no desire to repeat anything which had been discussed. He had been compelled to leave the House for a short time, and was not aware the matter had been dealt with. A further point was that there was not a Vote at all in the new Estimates.

***The CHAIRMAN** said that that point had been fully discussed and dealt with, he believed to the general satisfaction of the Committee. The hon. Member was not entitled to take advantage of his absence to inflict upon the Committee arguments which had already been dealt with.

Mr. LOUGH said he had no desire either to take advantage of his absence or to raise matters which had been satisfactorily explained.

Resolutions to be reported upon Thursday; Committee to sit again to-morrow.

SUPPLY [25th February.]

Resolution reported.

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,700,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for Additional Expenditure, in respect of the following Army Services, viz.:—

	£
Vote 1. Pay, &c. of the Army	2,000,000
Vote 6. Transport and Remounts	2,100,000
Vote 7. Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies . .	2,030,000
Total . . .	£6,130,000
Excess Appropriations in Aid (Votes 1, 6, 7, 9, and 10) .	3,430,000
	£2,700,000

Resolution read a second time.

***Mr. McCRAE** (Edinburgh, E.) said that various explanations had been given regarding the sum of £900,000 included in this Resolution in respect of the Imperial military railways in South Africa, but each explanation had made the matter more involved, and he hoped the Secretary of State for War would take advantage of the present opportunity to give a final and logical explanation on the subject. The Financial Secretary to the War Office had told them that this item of £900,000 was only a matter of book-keeping. Then he said it was part of the price of the railways amounting to £1,250,000. They now found it was neither of these, and that this £900,000 had been spent on the maintenance of the railways while in military occupation, and that the balance of £350,000 was made up of stores taken out of stock. He understood that that £350,000 had been repaid; if that was the case he hoped the Secretary of State would say where the money had gone. According to the South African Loan and War Contribution Act, it was to go to the redemption of debt. If it had been so applied, the right hon. Gentleman would surely require, on the same footing as the £900,000, a Supplementary Estimate for the £350,000. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that the £900,000 had not been repudiated by the colonies, but it was said they had a counterclaim against the War Office. In that case he failed to see why the War Office Estimates should be charged with the sum at all. In any case the expenditure was part of the war expenditure; it was made out of the Army Votes, and so charged. What the House wanted to know was when the money was expended, and whether it was paid out of loans or out of revenue. He understood, however, from an answer given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on another matter, that the £900,000 was the balance of the £4,000,000 payable by the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies to this country. It ought to be dealt with in a different way altogether. He commended the Secretary of State for his reforming zeal, and he felt sure it was with the greatest possible pleasure that the House heard him say that it was desirable that the finances of the War Office should be put upon a basis beyond criticism. The year before last he complained that £10,000,000 sterling had been spent for a certain purpose without the authority of Parliament. That was not the way in which the finances of this great country should be carried on. That was only an instance of how they got into a habit of extravagance without realising where they were going. The time had come for this House to realise the necessity for economy, and he hoped the Secretary of State for War would give such an explanation as would satisfy the House upon this particular point. After reading over the proceedings when this matter was discussed in Committee, he must say that the position was a very involved one, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to throw some light upon the question. He begged to move a reduction of the Vote by £900,000.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out '£2,700,000' and insert '£1,800,000.'"—(*Mr. McCrae.*)

Question proposed "That '£2,700,000' stand part of the said Resolution."

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield) said that perhaps a good deal of misunderstanding had been caused by a mistake made on his own part. He wished to remind the House that an explanation had been given on this point. A sum of £1,250,000 had been expended by the Government in the repair and maintenance of the line. The item of £900,000 was expended in cash, and had not been charged against the Estimates; £350,000, on the other hand, had been charged against the Estimates in the past, out of stores.

*MR. McCRAE said that surely the £900,000 was in the same position.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said that was not so, for the £900,000 had not been charged against the Estimates at all. He assumed that the money was going to be repaid because it had been expended upon a certain service, namely, the reconstruction and improvement of the railway.

*MR. McCRAE asked if the £350,000 had been repaid.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: No. Inasmuch as there was some doubt as to whether the money was to be repaid he was sorry that he had spoken of the matter as one of book-keeping; but if, as he hoped, it would be repaid that description would be a perfectly correct one.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham) asked whether the British Government was held responsible for all the damage done to the railway while it was in the possession of the military authorities.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said the Government had repaired the damage, and they considered that they had placed the line in a better condition then it was in when they found it. Therefore they contended that the colonies should repay the amount. If the money were repaid it would not go to the Army Votes, but, under the Act, to the relief of the National Debt.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) said the hon. Member had made the point as to how and when the money was spent quite clear, but he had not told them what steps were being taken to obtain the repayment of this money which was clearly due from the colonies. The railways ought not to have been handed over until it was perfectly clear that this money would be repaid. The Transvaal Government had now got possession of this asset, and by a counterclaim they were attempting to cancel their liability. When our troops took possession of the country the railway was in our possession, and they were in a position to say to the Civil Government upon what terms they could acquire the railways. The actual money which had been put into the railways in the way of new and improved bridges, rolling stock, and stores were obviously matters for purchase on the part of the Civil Government when the railways were handed over. Twelve months ago the Colonial Secretary informed them what a splendid property these railways were, and he based his estimate for raising £65,000,000 of debt on the profit-making value of these particular railways. He actually declared that Lord Milner estimated a profit of £2,500,000 on the working of these railways. Surely a business in a position to make a profit of that kind ought not to object to paying a sum like that which was contained in this Estimate. If they were making this profit it was rather too much of a good thing that the very first thing repaid should not be the money due to the taxpayers, and in default of that we ought to have possession of these railways. He wished to press his request, to which no answer had been made, that the correspondence between the Government and Lord Milner as to the nature of the counterclaim, and the excuses by which the payment of this money had been either challenged or postponed, should be laid on the Table. It was on that point that the Committee was not satisfied when this Vote was closured, and they ought to be satisfied before they allowed the money to be charged to the British taxpayer. This was much too shadowy a basis upon which to put off a claim of £900,000 due to the British taxpayer. Surely the hon. Member opposite would not contest this fact, for he understood him to assent to the statement that a large amount of profit was being made on the railways, and surely any concern making a large profit ought to pay its just debts. They had handed over the railways, which he understood were valued at between £11,000,000 and £13,000,000, and yet the colonies hesitated to repay this small sum of £1,500,000. He did not think the Government were taking a strong attitude, and unless they stiffened their backs and stood up to Lord Milner they would not get this money repaid. There were three items in this Vote which, in his opinion, ought to have been placed on the taxpayers of the colony, and not on the British Exchequer, and they amounted to £1,500,000. The House would remember that twelve months ago, when £3,000,000 was voted, they were distinctly promised that that would be absolutely the final sum, and they were told the same thing with regard to the South African Constabulary. It appeared now that after having made that bargain the Transvaal Government was to be allowed to run off without paying its share. He thought the House ought to strongly protest against this sort of thing.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said he should like to ask what was being done towards establishing our claim to this money. He was entirely in favour of railways being owned by the Government of the country where that was possible. That was a good principle, provided the Transvaal Government could pay for the railways. The result in this case was that we had already spent £350,000 on the railways, a sum which, for the present, was practically lost. They were told that there was some possibility of getting it, but the Government was entirely to blame for handing over the railways in the way they had done. There was no doubt as to the railways being a paying concern. Apparently the Transvaal Government was an insolvent purchaser. If this transaction had not been carried out in this way there would have been about £1,000,000 less capital to be raised by the Government. The harm that was being done to the country by this careless financial system was incalculable. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able to give the House an assurance that negotiations were in progress, and something was being done towards getting a pledge out of the Colonial Government that we were to get our money back again in cash, and to get it back quickly. It was quite true that the colony was in a very bad way, but if the colony was too poor to pay, the railway ought to have been sold to some one who could afford to pay for it.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL said he understood that the position was this. We took over the railways during the war, and, having got them into our hands, we repaired them and handed them over to the Transvaal and the Orange River Colonies, and that now a claim was made by us for £1,200,000. The Transvaal Government and the Orange River Colony Government said, "It is quite true that you have spent money on the railways, but in the meantime you have injured the rolling stock and you have damaged the railways." It seemed to him that we had a very real claim. He asked the Committee to remember that the great bulk of the damage done to the railways was done before we got them. The Boers tore up everything they could tear up. He could understand that we were responsible for making good the damage to the railways after they came into our hands, but the responsibility for making good the damage which was done before then was quite another question. The damage done to the railways while in our hands could not be anything like so great as the damage which was done before that time. The condition in which the railways left our hands was at least £900,000 better than when they came into our hands. The Financial Secretary to the Treasury had pointed out that we had in some cases put in bridges which would accommodate a double line of rails. These bridges were superior to the old bridges. He should like to know what were the items of the counterclaim, for £900,000 seemed a large amount for any tear and wear there could have been. The House should be put in possession of some of the correspondence dealing with this subject. He thought we should not count on getting this £900,000. His own opinion was that we would not get it. But we should not abandon our claim, so that in the future it could be regarded as a gift to the colonies which could definitely take its place in the profit and loss account between them and ourselves.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said there was a saying in Scotland, "ye canna tak' the breeks aff a Hielan'man," and that might be said in regard to the recovery of this money from the Transvaal. He thought the House ought to know a little more in regard to this absurd counterclaim put forward by the Transvaal. The Secretary of State for War had said that the counterclaim was for deterioration of the line and rolling stock while the railways were in military use. They were now discussing the fact that £1,250,000 had been spent on improving the line and the rolling stock. Considering all the circumstances of the case the counterclaim was absurd. All this money was spent before 31st March, 1902. The Financial Secretary told them that £350,000 had been voted by the House in previous years, but he had not told them the year's Estimates in which it was contained. He himself had looked through the Estimates of 1901-2 and 1902-3, and he had failed to find any item which in any specific degree referred to this charge. The statements of previous Chancellors of the Exchequer came to this, that there was necessity for the expending of about £1,000,000 on new sidings and bridges, and otherwise improving the lines for military purposes, and that the Treasury agreed that advances should be made out of Exchequer balances. A Suspense Account for that amount was opened. The then Chancellor of the Exchequer told them that when it came to his notice he was of opinion that a Suspense Account of such magnitude ought to be closed as speedily as possible. The substance of the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol was that, if he had imagined that the Suspense Account was to continue so long as it had done, he never would have allowed it. This was a very serious flaw in the control the House of Commons possessed over the expenditure of public money. The same thing was going on, although on a smaller scale, in respect of China. On the same page of the Appropriation Account there was a sum of £90,000 for railways in Northern China, with an explanatory foot-note, from which it appeared that this money was from a suspense account during the Chinese war. It had been kept in the suspense account in the hope that it would be recovered from the Chinese Indemnity. He thought they had a right to obtain a still further explanation of the way in which this large sum of money was originally issued, and how it was allowed to remain in the suspense account for a considerable period, without being brought to the consideration of Parliament. He should like also the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make some statement in regard to procedure in the future.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.) said that he had already given an explanation in regard to this matter, but he would now endeavour to repeat it. He agreed with his hon. friend that it was most desirable to place this charge on record as being one which the Government believed they could equitably make against the Transvaal Government; that they considered it to be a debt due from the Transvaal; and that they entertained a hope at the same time that it might be repaid. His hon. friend did not appear sanguine on that point, and that expression of opinion would not help in the payment of the money. The hon. Member for East Perth had spoken of the long continuance of suspense accounts as very unusual and very undesirable. He himself did not think that the practice was open to all the blame which was alleged against it. It seemed to be looked upon as normal by so high an authority as the Comptroller and Auditor-General, who made no comment at all on the irregularity which was said to attach to the system. But, from a strictly financial point of view, he personally saw great inconvenience in allowing these amounts to be carried on, whether in suspense accounts or otherwise, for such long periods. He supposed that the only justification for it was that cited by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as being the sole and adequate explanation for the present instance, viz., that war was being carried on, and Estimates for this kind of expenditure were made which were not in harmony with the ordinary financial practice of the country. There could be only one opinion, that it was not desirable that these enormous sums should be carried over for two years. There was no mystery about the debt. When the railways were taken over by the military, a portion of the money was spent on stores, such as rolling stock, railways, and machinery. The amount had been written off, as if paid for out of the Army Votes. Though it was believed that this sum, and a further sum, would be received by way of credit from the Transvaal Government, it had not been received, and, as far as the War Office was concerned, the transaction was at an end. The Colonial Office had been in communication with the Transvaal Government, and a counterclaim had been lodged. He was not in a position to give the details of the counterclaim; but, whatever its nature, it must be obvious that it was not a question upon which the Government could sue the Transvaal in the County Court. The subject was one for negotiation and correspondence between the two Administrations; but the authorities at home had been informed that, until the counterclaim was adjusted, payment would not be made by the Transvaal Government.

MR. RITCHIE (Croydon) said the real question was whether the country should wipe off this large amount of expenditure or not. He had no doubt that his right hon. friend had said all that it was possible for him to say; but, having regard to the great help which this House had given to the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, and the enormous amount of money which the House had freely voted to assist them, he thought that they had a right to expect at least fair treatment in a matter of this kind, where the money had been spent for their benefit, and would largely increase the value of their assets. The word "counterclaim" was not used in what he should call its ordinary acceptation. When he was in office, and engaged in controversy with the Colonial Office on this matter, he must say that he had never seen what he should call a "counterclaim"—that was to say, something set out in figures. As far as that kind of "counterclaim" was concerned, it had not existed while he was responsible for the finances of the country. It was perfectly true that the Transvaal Government said that they ought not to be called upon to pay this sum because of the damage which our troops had inflicted. But the claim was never a substantial one; it was rather in the nature of an afterthought. The Government ought to be really very firm with the Transvaal Government in maintaining that this claim should be paid. They ought not to be put off with the mere assertion of a "counterclaim," but should insist on facts and figures which could be tested and considered. Having regard to all the circumstances of the case, the Government ought really to be very firm in maintaining that this claim should be paid. He hoped that the War Office and the Treasury would be able to get greater assistance from the Colonial Office in this matter, and that the Government would not cease to push the claim and endeavour to get some definite facts and figures which would enable them to judge the value of the counterclaim.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said this was the third time that the Committee had discussed the item, and every time it was discussed it became more serious both as regarded finance and also with regard to the prospects of getting payment. After what had fallen from the Secretary of State for War he hoped that the Committee would have some information from the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Secretary of the Treasury as to what the actual position was. They now knew that the War Office had washed its hands of the matter altogether and did not care two straws whether the money was paid or not.

***MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER** said he did not say that.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that the right hon. Gentleman stated that the War Office had nothing more to do with the matter.

***MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER** said what he said was that the War Office had nothing to do with the money as it would not come to them.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that at all events, as far as the War Office was concerned they had practically no interest in the matter. The two Departments that were now practically interested were the Colonial Office and the Treasury, and the Committee would like to hear something regarding the matter from the latter Department. After what had been said by the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken it was quite evident that if they were to depend on the Colonial Office they would be leaning on a very broken reed, and, therefore, they would have to depend on the Treasury. He was sorry the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not present. He did not blame the right hon. Gentleman, because he did not know the matter was coming on; but perhaps the Secretary to the Treasury would be able to answer this point. When they were discussing this question the other day, the Committee was not aware that the claim was in such a parlous condition; and, therefore, they did not pay the same attention as they otherwise would to what fell from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Now they found that the War Office was not interested in the claim, and that the Colonial Office was in favour of the Colonies. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said the other day that the figures of the claim were agreed on as between the Colonies and the Home Government and were accepted by both as final. Subsequently, he said, a counterclaim was raised; and he added that correspondence was still proceeding on the subject, and that at present the Treasury was supporting the War Office in its claim. What did the right hon. Gentleman mean by "at present?" What was the point on which the Treasury were weakening? What guarantee had the Committee that the claim would be pressed? He remembered when the matter of the claim was first raised, there was then no counterclaim. It was raised on the financial report of Lord Milner in which he explained the grounds on which he based his proposal for lending the Transvaal £35,000,000, and this was one of the items to be regarded as part of the loan. It was put down as a disputed claim to a certain extent but not to the full extent. It might be a little more or a little less, but the general claim was not disputed. Why was not the amount stopped from the loan before handing it over to the Transvaal? If the matter were in dispute the amount could be put on one side and need not be applied to any other purpose. That would be a simple way of obtaining the money if the claim were upheld; whereas, at present, there was very little chance of getting it. As had been stated by the hon. Member for Oldham the Committee was absolutely entitled to information as to the nature of this counterclaim. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon said it was of a most nebulous description; and that, as far as he was concerned, it was a sort of a general idea that this country having claimed £1,000,000 the Transvaal should also claim £1,000,000. He wished to know whether the Government had got any particulars with reference to this counterclaim, and whether they considered it of any real substance. He was entitled to press for information on this point, especially having regard to what fell from the Chancellor of the Exchequer a few days ago. If the Committee voted £900,000 now the claim would probably be lost to the country for ever.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he had no hesitation in saying that these Supplementary War Office Estimates were the most monstrous that had ever been presented to the House of Commons, and this particular item was the most monstrous item of all. It now appeared that this was a matter of responsibility as between the Colonial Office, the War Office, and the Treasury. It would be remembered that the late Colonial Secretary said that this £900,000 would be a first charge on the railway. Was it a first charge on the railway? If it were, undoubtedly they would get the money, no matter what the counterclaim might be. But, with the Secretary of State for War washing his hands of it, no one knew what were the particulars of the counterclaim, and they had it gravely before them as a serious definite matter which they ought to take into consideration in estimating the propriety of voting this £900,000. He thought that was not treating the House of Commons seriously, and it seemed to him that the Committee ought not to vote the money until they had a satisfactory and complete explanation from either the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Secretary of the Treasury. What was the character of this counterclaim? Why did it exist? What was it for? Was it for the construction of railways or loss of rolling stock, or was it, as some of them suspected, a purely bogus claim set up to meet the just claim £900,000. The Secretary of State for War said that the Comptroller and Auditor-General made no reference to this matter. The right hon. Gentleman did the Comptroller and Auditor-General a very great injustice, because he did remark on this very item. Referring to outstanding questions, of which this was one, he said that, in view of the very exceptional pressure, he considered it preferable not to suggest disallowances with regard to expenditure still the subject of inquiry, but to treat such expenditure as subject to later substantiation in full and adjustment. Therefore the Comptroller and Auditor-General was by no means blind to the existence of this matter; and although he allowed the item he did it under the impression that further explanation would be forthcoming. The Government now, however, asked the Committee to vote this £900,000 before the item was substantiated. It appeared to him that such a demand had never been previously made. If there was a counterclaim they ought to know its nature and what it consisted of, and then they could judge whether it was well founded. The Committee was entitled before voting this money to have a full explanation from the Treasury Bench, and he thought the debate had proceeded sufficiently long to permit of the presence of some official of the Treasury who would be able to give that explanation.

*SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington) said that on previous occasions when the item was discussed he had asked for particulars of the counterclaim, and he was glad that the House now demanded those particulars. If the particulars could not be given surely the correspondence on the subject, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer said the other day was proceeding, might be laid on the Table, so that the House could judge for itself in what position the country was as to this acknowledged debt. Let the House see the correspondence before they took over this bad debt of £900,000. If it was a good debt the country must have the benefit of it, if not they ought to have some information as to whether it was completely cancelled by the counterclaim or only in part, and, if so, to what extent.

MR. AINSWORTH (Argyll) said that when we took possession of the country the railways passed into the hands of the Government. We spent something like £900,000 upon them to put them in good order. Against that we handed them over to the Transvaal Government for £1,250,000. We ought to have held them until we got the money. Unfortunately we did not do that, but there was a definite statement from Lord Milner that the £900,000 was an indebtedness, and what he asked now was whether we were going to get anything out of that £900,000 and how the £1,250,000 was to be recovered by this country.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.) said the reason why the Vote asked for was only £900,000 and not £1,250,000 was because the item of £350,000 had already been voted and it would be an absurd proceeding to ask the House to vote one amount twice over. This was money which we claimed to recover from the Transvaal Government, but it was notorious that the Transvaal Government, at the present time, were not in a position to pay.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL here interjected a remark which did not reach the Gallery.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Member for Oldham need not have been in such a hurry to interrupt.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL said he only wished to state that inability to pay had nothing to do with the validity of the claim.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said it had a good deal to do with the pressing of it. This was a valid claim which we had against the Transvaal Government, and that was admitted by the right hon. Member for West Bristol and the right hon. Member for Croydon.

MR. RITCHIE said his view was that if there was a counterclaim the House ought to be told what that counterclaim was; the general statement that there was a counterclaim meant nothing at all.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said both his predecessors and himself held this to be a valid claim, which they ought to recover from the Transvaal Government when it was in a position to pay, but admittedly that Government was not now in that position, and therefore he did not think it was a matter of immediate urgency. Coming to the counterclaim, which had been described by the right hon. Member for Croydon as nebulous, and which the right hon. Gentleman said they ought to know the details of, that counterclaim was in respect to damage done to the old rolling stock and old works, while the railways were in our possession, in distinction from the new rolling stock and new works which we had provided and for which we claimed £900,000. The details of the counterclaim had not reached him, but he had disputed it on principle quite apart from the details, as it did not seem to him to be well founded. The correspondence was still proceeding between the Transvaal and the home Government in respect to this matter, and he could not safely enter into the details of that correspondence while it was still unfinished. Under the circumstances he hoped the House would not press for further details at present.

MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.) asked whether the counterclaim had ever been formulated in figures?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No.

MR. ASQUITH: Not even approximately?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir. So far as I know we are not in possession of any details of the counterclaim.

MR. McCRAE asked whether it was not the case that the £1,250,000 which included the £900,000 was to be paid out of the £35,000,000 loan. If that were so it disposed of the question of ability to pay.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that that did not disprove the point. In any case, the Transvaal had not yet got the £35,000,000, as there were still £5,000,000 of the loan unissued. He had already told the House that he could give them no details as to the counterclaim at the present time, and had promised to give full information on the arrival of a promised communication from South Africa. He had also explained that his objection to the counterclaim was one of principle and not of detail. An hon. Member had asked whether the Government would insist on getting this money, and had suggested that it was absurd to talk about a matter in dispute or in negotiation between this Government and the Government of the Transvaal, because after all the Government of the Transvaal were the Gentlemen sitting on the Treasury Bench. No doubt as long as the Transvaal remained a Crown colony the Government in the House of Commons could exercise considerable influence over it, but immediately it became a self-governing colony, which he understood to be the policy of hon. Members opposite, that influence would become less. In any case, he did not intend to depart from the position he had taken up, viz., that we ought to recover this money when the Transvaal was in a position to pay, and the fact that the House voted this money in order to place its own books in a proper condition would not, or at least ought not, in any way to prejudice our power to recover the money from the Transvaal. If anything prejudiced that recovery it would be the speeches which had been made during the debate. [Cries of "Oh, oh."] One Gentleman after another had expressed to the House his conviction that the money would never be recovered and that we were on a fool's errand in attempting its recovery. He deprecated language of that kind. It afforded some justification for the course pursued by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon in delaying the presentation of this Estimate. Probably the right hon. Gentleman's reason for taking that course was that he did not think discussion in that House would assist him to recover the debt, and the debate had shown how well founded that view was.

Mr. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) regretted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have thought fit to lecture the House on the manner in which its debates should be conducted, especially in view of the fact that, although a matter vitally affecting his own Department had been under discussion, the right hon. Gentleman had been so discourteous as to come in only at the fag end of the debate. The more this matter was examined into the more absurd appeared the position of the Government. The suggestion of a counterclaim was treated by ex-Chancellors of the Exchequer as a "put-up" job or an afterthought. The fact that after two years correspondence, a despatch containing full particulars was said to be on the way to this country was surely a reason for postponing the Vote for a few weeks. The truth was that the counterclaim was a mere bogey and could not be sustained. When the money was wanted there was no suggestion that the colonies would be unable to pay, and it was very ungracious on their part that they should suggest any counterclaim against expenditure incurred on their behalf during the war. No reason whatever had been shown why the matter should not be cleared up before the Vote was agreed to.

Mr. TOULMIN (Bury, Lancashire) said that what the House desired was a complete and clear statement on behalf of the Cabinet concerning this matter. The question should not be decided out of any feeling of charity towards the Transvaal. The present financial position of that colony had no bearing whatever on the justice or injustice of the claims it had made. If money was to be given to the Transvaal it should be by a direct Vote. The matter had passed through the hands of three Chancellors of the Exchequer, and surely it was time the question of liability was settled. There ought not to be any difficulty with regard to laying before Parliament the correspondence on the subject, as it was not a matter of negotiation with some foreign Power where delicate international questions had to be considered; it was a matter concerning a colony for the government of which this country was responsible, and no harm could possibly be done by placing Parliament in possession of all the facts. The House had not yet sufficient information to justify the granting of this money, and the matter might very well be postponed for a little longer in order that the necessary details might be given.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 226; Noes 128. (Division List No. 56.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R. (Tower Hamlets)
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir John E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W.
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, Maj Evans-(T'r H'mlets
Gore, Hn. G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gore Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Earnest Frederick Geo.
Heath, James (Staffords, N. W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks, N. R
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter Bristol, S.
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick G.
Mitchell, Edw. (Fermanagh, N.)
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones Lt.-Col. Edward
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (Stalybridge)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut-Col. Thos. Myles
Sasson, Sir Edward Albert

Saunderson, Rt Hn. Col. Edw. J.
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, H. C (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot Lord E. (Chicester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Ox'd Univ.
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood, and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abranam, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon Herbert Henry
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bell, Richard
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Ellice, Capt E. C (S. And'w'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Ffrench, Peter
Flynn, James Christopher
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grey, Rt. Hn. Sir E. (Berwick)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Mooney, John J.
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murnaghan, George
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C R. (Northants
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan Donal
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Walton, John Lawson (Leeds, S.
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W, R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. M'Crae and Mr. Whiteley.

Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

EVENING SITTING.

ST. MARYLEBONE ELECTRIC LIGHTING BILL (BY ORDER).

MR. GODDARD (Ipswich) said in moving the Instruction standing in his name he might perhaps be allowed to deal shortly with the history of the Bill. The borough of St. Marylebone had been supplied by the Metropolitan Electric Supply Company for some years, but the local authority in 1901 obtained a Provisional Order for the purpose of supplying electric light in competition with that company. In order to do that they had to buy out the company, and under an arbitration the borough council had to pay about £1,250,000 for the undertaking. Up to that time the arrangements had been made without any general sanction from the ratepayers. Having obtained these powers the council failed to carry out the contract, and the company brought an action against them by means of which they obtained an order for the amount of the arbitration award. That was suspended in order to enable them to obtain a Bill in Parliament to borrow money for the purpose. That Bill had now passed its Second Reading, and it provided not only for the arbitration award but for a further expenditure of £500,000 for the purpose of constructing a generating station. The Instruction on the face of it was a very reasonable one, and was one that had been inserted in several previous Acts of Parliament. The first part of it laid down the principle that there ought to be supplied, annually, a statement of affairs and a balance-sheet showing the trading profit and loss. No one could raise any objection to that, as any ratepayer ought to be able to see if he was to be charged with a rate to make up some deficiency on the trading of the corporation. The second part suggested that the borough council should fix, annually, the charge to be made for the supply of the electrical energy, so that the revenue of the undertaking should cover the expenditure for the manufacture of the light, the interest on the money borrowed, and the sinking fund. Without such an Instruction it would be possible for the borough council to charge less than the cost and make up the loss so incurred out of the general rate, and against such a thing as that the ratepayers ought to be safeguarded. Electric light was more of a luxury than a necessity, and it could only be used in this case by the wealthier portion of the community in their private houses and by tradesmen in a large way of business. In Marylebone 25 per cent. of the ratepayers were supplied with electric light, and it would not be fair or just for the remaining 75 per cent. to have a rate put upon them in order that the remaining 25 per cent. might enjoy this luxury at a low price. The Metropolitan Electric Lighting Company had been supplying this district at a profit, as was shown by the award of the arbitrators, and therefore it was perfectly obvious that the Marylebone Corporation ought to be able to supply electric light at a profit at present prices. With regard to fixing the price after one year he was not tied to that particular time, but thought there would be no difficulty in so doing owing to the number of consumers that existed in the borough. This matter could not be left to the Committee to deal with, and, if it were not settled by the House, it in all probability would not be settled at all, because all those who could have raised the question in Committee had now no *locus standi.* His observation led him to suppose that in the future there would be a far larger number of municipal councils which would undertake trading concerns of this kind, especially those which in some way or other interfered with the management of the roads. He was rather in favour of that view, but he asserted that the credit of public life demanded that these undertakings should at least be carried out in the most fair, open, and straightforward way possible.

*MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) said he did not support this Instruction on any grounds personal to the Marylebone scheme, with which he had no acquaintance. He supported it because the question raised by it was one of principle, Parliament in its wisdom having thought fit to give local authorities power to use the ratepayers' money for the purpose of manufacturing electric light and competing in industrial enterprises. He was against committing to local authorities general powers of trading but he was prepared to admit that public lighting should be committed to the charge of the local authority, and if in this case it was a question of public lighting no one would complain. But when it came to supplying light to private consumers it was important that accounts should be kept which would show that the benefits conferred on the few were not conferred at the expense of the many. If powers of competition were given to local authorities they should be compelled to render accounts that the ratepayers might see that they were not paying for the light supplied to consumers. They should render a balance-sheet and a profit and loss account, showing not only how much of the ratepayers' money was expended but what the return was, and the profit and loss account should show that the revenue from the consumers was sufficient to pay the expense to which the local authority was put in the manufacture and supply. In this case, inasmuch as the Metropolitan Electric Lighting Company was already supplying this district at a profit, it followed that the local authority should have no difficulty in rendering an account at the end of each year after the one year granted to them for making the transfer. It was bad enough for the ratepayers to have to find the capital for these undertakings, but it would be still worse if the non-consumers, to assist consumers, were mulcted in a rate to make up a deficit. He would not labour the point; it was a business matter and one that should occur to a business community. He begged to second the Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to insert provisions in the Bill to the effect that the council shall, once in every year after the first year's working of the electric lighting undertaking, cause to be laid before them a statement and balance-sheet of the accounts of the electric lighting undertaking drawn up in accordance with the form of accounts prescribed by the Board of Trade for a local authority under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, and the council shall thereupon fix annually the charges to be made for the supply of electrical energy in the then ensuing year at such rates (not exceeding the maximum rates specified in the Order of 1901) so that so far as is reasonably practicable, the revenue for that year shall not be less than the estimated amount of the expenditure and of the charges for interest and sinking fund for that year." — (*Mr. Goddard.*)

Mr. BOULNOIS (Marylebone, E.) said he had always been opposed to municipal trading of every kind and had done everything in his power to prevent the council from entering into such a mad project as the purchase of a hugh undertaking under the Lands Clauses Act. He went so far as to refuse to allow his name to be put on the purchase Bill, but the ratepayers of Marylebone having decided by a considerable majority to proceed with the Bill to provide purchase-money, he was anxious to help them to get through a bad bargain in the best manner they could. He hoped the House would not make the burden harder to bear, as it would be if the Instruction were passed. In his opinion such Instructions tied the hands of the Committee when the matter came before them. While he agreed that there might possibly be excellent reasons why some such clause as this should be inserted, on the other hand there might be reasons why it should not be inserted, and he maintained that the House was not the proper tribunal to decide such questions off-hand. The hon. Member for Ipswich claimed that the ratepayers would not be represented, but this Instruction had been put down at the instigation of the Gas Light and Coke Company, and that company presented a petition against the Bill before the Standing Committee to which the borough council did not object. He agreed that this proposal might be an excellent one in principle. It might be right to argue that those who did not use the electric light ought not to be compelled to pay a rate in aid of it, but he could not help thinking that this Instruction would hamper the Borough Council of Marylebone to such an extent that it would render it almost incapable of carrying out the undertaking and it would create a ridiculous and ludicrous position. He agreed that the borough council was bound to keep regular and accurate accounts, but that question did not enter into the discussion at all, for the proposal was that the charge for electricity in each area should be based on the balance-sheet of the previous year. The certainty would be that in the first two or three years the price would have to be raised to the consumer every year if this Instruction were carried. He did not think that would tend to an extension of business and it would lead to an enormous amount of irritation and dissatisfaction amongst the consumers. He thought something might be said in favour of a revision of prices every three years, but to do it every year would cause confusion and render it almost impossible to carry on the undertaking. It was well known that these companies entered into special contracts with large consumers and gave them a reduction in price, but contracts of that kind were not made for one year for they invariably extended over a number of years. He hoped such a clause as that which was suggested would not be inserted, and he trusted the House would insist upon a full inquiry before adopting such an Instruction. It was impossible that the undertaking could be made to pay immediately after it had been taken over, and this instruction might prevent the borough council making it a prosperous concern in years to come. He hoped the House would not impose such an Instruction without inquiry for it might throw an additional burden upon his Borough.

*MR. MOULTON (Cornwall, Launceston) said he happened to have an intimate personal acquaintance with the circumstances of this case by reason of his having acted as Counsel in the Arbitration which fixed the price at which the Marylebone Corporation acquired the undertaking. He was not going to inflict upon the House his views in regard to municipal trading, but he thought hon. Members would agree with him that the question the House should decide was whether they should allow municipal trading or not, and if they allowed it they ought to do so fully and not with one hand take away the power of trading while with the other they gave authority to trade. In electric lighting the most important thing was that a company or municipal body should have a perfectly free hand as to the business management of the concern. Of all the large supply businesses he knew of none in which the cost of the article supplied was so enormously diminished by the scale of supply as electricity. To give to a body the power to supply electricity and then to say that if at any moment they found they were not making a profit they must raise their price was practically to drive them into bankruptcy. If they were losing money the best course would probably be to drop the price and not to raise it. An Instruction such as the present one could only be proposed in the interests of the gas companies, the trade rivals of electric lighting. The Legislature compelled local authorities to repay their capital, which was a very severe term to impose, and one from which trading companies were free, and to add to it the suicidal condition that when there was a deficit they must raise their prices would be treatment so unjust as to be wholly unworthy of the past traditions of the House. He gathered from the speech of the hon. Member who moved this Instruction that there were such questions on foot as that of compelling Marylebone to buy electricity in bulk from some particular company. As this House could not go into the actual circumstances of the case surely it was not going to commit itself to an Instruction which might have the effect of practically giving back to a company the full value of an undertaking for which it had been paid. He thought this was a matter of a kind which the House ought never to meddle with by such Instructions as this. But, in addition to these general considerations, there were special features in the legislation as to Marylebone which would render it little less than a scandal if, at this stage of the matter, the Instruction were passed. Two years ago the Legislature passed a Bill which not only permitted, but made it the duty of, the Marylebone Corporation to purchase this electric lighting undertaking. The present Bill was simply for the purpose of enabling the corporation to borrow the money that was necessary to carry out what the Legislature had put upon them. It would not be fair now, when it came to ask for the necessary power to borrow the money, to put these new and onerous terms upon the Corporation.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars) said several requests had been made to the Board of Trade to insert this clause in Electric Lighting Provisional Orders, but the Board of Trade had always refused to do so. As far as he could see, the object of the Instruction was, in the first place, to protect private interests—in this case a gas company—against what was said to be unfair competition, and, in the second place, to protect the ratepayers. There could be no doubt whatever that the Instruction would fully achieve the first object. It would protect private interests, but at this cost that it would impose upon the local authority, that was upon the ratepayers, conditions of competition which were altogether unfair. General considerations of municipal trading had nothing whatever to do with the matter as it now came before the House. Arguments of that kind should be considered when it was to be decided whether or not certain powers should be given to a local authority. But once those powers had been given, as was the case here, it was obviously the duty of the House to see that the local authority was put in a position to enable them to trade on as good terms as any private individual. To lay down that the way to turn a loss into a profit was to increase the charge, was contrary to the experience of almost every commercial undertaking in the world, and there was no commercial undertaking in which this was more true than in regard to electric lighting. It was constantly urged that municipalities should be made to carry on their business upon general commercial lines, but could anyone imagine the private individual carrying on his business upon the principle laid down in this Instruction. The same principles which applied to ordinary commercial dealings applied more strongly to electric lighting, the success of which depended largely upon the number of consumers.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said the Secretary to the Board of Trade had covered the ground in so pertinent a manner that he had left little for anyone to add in opposing the Instruction. The hon. Member who moved the Instruction laid great stress on the desirability of publicity. He only rose for the purpose of satisfying the hon. Member on that particular point. Under the Borough Funds Act the ratepayer had access to all the information any reasonable ratepayer should require. In addition to that, the hon. Member would find that there were conditions prescribed by the Board of Trade in connection with electric lighting undertakings which would secure what the hon. Member desired when he said that everything should be open and above board. Where these rules did not apply, the Local Government Board could interpose to prevent anything of a secret or collusive character, such as the hon. Member feared. If this onerous Instruction were imposed, he believed the Borough Council of St. Marylebone would have the greatest possible difficulty in making the undertaking a financial success. The ratepayers had by two to one spoken in favour of the Bill, and the only interest opposed to it was the Gas Light and Coke Company, who were rivals in the sphere of illumination. It seemed to him to be a gratuitous impertinence on their part to ask Parliament to take their side and to handicap the borough council in the way proposed.

Question put, and negatived.

TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

*MR. HENRY HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, E.) moved a Resolution of which he had given notice, declaring that in the opinion of the House the cost of the training of teachers should be charged on the National Exchequer. He said there was no question in connection with education which was more looked to at the present moment than this, or which more required the attention of the Government. He supposed there would be general agreement that there was need for the provision of further facilities for training. It was not necessary for him to weary the House with figures, because those given by the Secretary of the Board of Education in a Paper distributed that morning sufficiently indicated the position. That information shortly came to this, that whereas there were every year between 6,000 and 7,000 persons who qualified for entering the training colleges, less than half could find admission. The pressure on the existing colleges was increasing daily. Although the residential colleges had been enlarged from time to time, they were practically full, and in the opinion of the best judges they could not be indefinitely enlarged without doing considerable damage to the standard of their education. On the other hand, the University colleges had latterly gathered to themselves a large number of teachers in training, and some of the colleges were beginning to be afraid that their non-professional students would be swamped by those who wished to enter their fortresses. Everybody who was conversant with the work of the local education authorities at the present moment knew that the demand for teachers was growing more pressing every day, and that many of them had to take teachers who had no training, to fill posts which ought to be filled by properly trained and qualified teachers. It was most essential in our great system of national education to keep up not only the quantity but the quality of the teachers. It was really bad economy, when spending £14,000,000 or £15,000,000 a year from the rates and taxes on salaries, buildings, apparatus, and the like, in connection with education, not to see that the schools were staffed with a full supply of well-trained teachers in order to secure a proper return for this great expenditure.

Where did the responsibility to remedy the present difficulty primarily reside? He ventured to say that the Government of this country had really never faced this question, and had never recognised the duty laid upon it to take the principal step in supplying the deficiency in this part of our educational system. What was the history of the training of teachers in this country? It was left, up to very recent years, to the generosity of private persons, or to the enterprise of such societies as the National Society and the British Employment Society to establish training colleges. Up to 1860 these societies were largely aided by grants from the National Exchequer for building purposes, but since then he believed that no grants had been given by the State. Some ten or twelve years ago, when his friend Mr. Acland was at the Education Board, there was a new and useful departure whereby day training colleges were established in connection with the Universities, but it was not until yesterday that it was considered the duty of any local authority to establish colleges, or to put any substantial burden on the rates for this national purpose. A clause was inserted in the Education Act of 1902 giving the local education authorities power to train teachers, but it was an optional power, and the question was only discussed then from the denominational point of view. The cost of the training of teachers was now for the first time made a matter of local taxation, instead of a matter of Imperial taxation. In his view the training of teachers was a matter of national concern. He would try to justify that as briefly as he could. As a rule, putting aside a certain number of our large cities, it was impossible to treat the question of the training of teachers as a local question, and that for several reasons. In the first place there were about 130 different local education authorities, and those who had to deal with them knew how difficult it was to get them to agree to combined action for any purpose; and the difficulty would be increased in the matter of the training of teachers as the duty was not obligatory but optional. He did not think his hon. friend the Secretary to the Board would care to undertake the job of forcing the local authorities to do their share of the work in the training of teachers. But if the hon. Gentleman did so another difficulty would arise—a considerable grievance which he might call in classical language "*Sic vos, non vobis.*" Those who were conscientious would be training teachers, if they had the money, for other localities to which, possibly by higher salaries or other reasons, teachers would go and leave them in the lurch. They could not localise this work. There were some people who imagined that a teacher could be bound down to serve a long time in a very restricted locality. He ventured to say that if any system of that kind were tried there would be in a short time an agitation from some quarters which would overthrow the system of indentured work. If the country authorities did not do their duty in this matter it would be a misfortune, because there was what he would call excellent raw material in the country districts for the training of teachers, and it was desirable that they should get the country brain as well as the town brain. Lastly, there arose the difficulty of a higher education rate. This training was to be paid for, not out of the ordinary compulsory education rate, but out of another rate, and there were many ratepayers in this country who would hesitate to add to their present assessments a 4d. or a 6d. rate for this purpose. All those difficulties made it clear that little would be done by the local authorities for the training of teachers until the work was made easier for them by the central authority.

Again, the regulations issued by the central authority for the improvement of the training of pupil teachers would, if carried out, be very costly to the local authorities. For instance, it was calculated that the regulations would impose an extra expense of £20,000 a year on the West Riding of Yorkshire. The local authorities were hit by these regulations in several ways. In the first place the restriction in regard to age swept away the monitor and probationer, and created a large number of vacancies which had to be filled by assistants. It was all very well to carry out this improvement in large towns with concentrated populations and good conditions; but it was a very different thing in scattered country districts, where they had to provide new buildings, boarding for many of the students, and travelling expenses as well. These regulations, it was true, were not to come fully into force until next year, but he did not know that that allowed too much time for the arrangements that had to be made. The Department had taken a rather serious step already in prohibiting teachers in voluntary schools from giving instruction to pupil teachers out of school hours. That was done under cover of preventing what were called extraneous duties, but when that question was discussed in the House extraneous duties were understood to mean such things as playing the organ, or other non-educational duties. Of course the result of the action of the Department was obvious; it meant that educational teaching must only be given in pupil-teacher centres which had to be provided by the local authorities. The general outcome of the matter was a three-fold burden on the rates for shortage of teachers, shortage of training colleges, and raising of the standard. It was no wonder that the over-burdened ratepayers cried out, and asked that, if the Government dictated a new policy, they should also pay for it. The County Councils Association passed a strong resolution in regard to the matter the other day; and he had had letters within the last few days from friends who demanded a national rather than a provincial system in order to secure a universal standard. His friend Mr. Acland wrote him recently—

> "We are far behind many other countries in this matter of training, and we shall remain behind unless a wholly new method is adopted. We suffer at present from a policy which has too often existed in this country of mis-spending millions for want of a prudent expenditure of a comparatively small additional sum. At present, only one-fourth of our elementary teachers have been to a training college. As long as this continues, a very large number of the children will seriously suffer."

Now as to the Motion which he wished to put before the House. In the first place, it did not propose to relieve private persons but only aimed at recalling the central education authority to some sense of responsibility in this matter; and, in the second place, it did not propose to increase the public burdens further than such an increase was desired by the Education Department. No doubt national expenditure was heavy, but so was local expenditure; and there was no better way of swelling that expenditure than to allow Government Departments to force expenditure on the local authorities. He wished to credit the Government with certain larger grants. There was on the Estimates a sum of £10,500 towards the training of teachers. That was no doubt due to the increase in the number of teachers, and there was also an increase of £750 for hostels. The Government, however, had abolished 75 per cent. almost at the expense of the training schools and did not give a penny more for buildings. It might be said that they were going to give £40,000 more for training colleges, but what was that when a single riding of a county had to expend £20,000 on training colleges. If the regulations were to be carried out, these grants must be largely increased. He could not accept the Amendment of his hon. friend the Member for Camberwell, who proposed that only "the greater part" of the training of teachers should be charged on the national exchequer, because the Government would say that they accepted that at once, because they had already paid the greater part of the cost. He did not wish the present system to continue as it stood; he wished the Government to assume greater responsibility. He had no objection to large towns conducting experiments in regard to education, but there must be proper safeguards against extravagance. In a national matter of this kind the great bulk of the money should be found by the national exchequer, and they could not expect the local authorities to incur unpopularity and odium by raising large additional sums for national, not local, purposes. He begged to move.

*SIR MICHAEL FOSTER (London University) said that in seconding the Resolution of his right hon. friend, he trusted he should not be weakening the force of his argument if he ventured to make a few observations from quite a different point of view from that taken by the right hon. Member for Somerset. There was a story that a German professor who had come to England for the first time, asked Mr. H. Sidgewick how it was that in this country there was no class of what was called in Germany *gelehrte*; and the answer was that we had the class but called them prigs. He was free to confess that he had the advantage of drawing the conclusion not only from observation, and also from introspection, that the people whose lives were attached to knowledge exclusively, either in acquiring or distributing it, were subject to the besetting sin of priggishness. It was very important that the teachers should be free from that influence. This was a matter of national importance, because he agreed with his right hon. friend that the elementary teacher belonged to no town, to no country; he belonged to the nation. It was necessary that he or she should not be a mere didactic machine, and that he or she should be trained to be a man or a woman, and he would say a man or woman of the world, so as to train up children to take their place in the world. Now to do that, and to prevent the introduction of priggism, they had to ask themselves what were the circumstances most helpful in producing that characteristic. It was to place a person, while he was being trained within a narrow circle, in the midst of those who were following the same pursuit, who did the same things in the same way, and who talked of nothing but what was common to them all. He could not help thinking that the clergy of the Church of England had received untold benefit from the fact that, in the majority of cases, they had been brought up at the Universities in the midst of other people, shoulder to shoulder with those who had other objects and other views; and it was his wish that the other clergy of this country, the teachers of the country, should have the same advantage. That was much more likely to be brought about, he thought, by throwing the cost, or at least the main cost, upon the national exchequer, because then there would be a greater likelihood of teachers taking advantage of the training of the Universities. He could not believe that there was any danger of those centres of learning being swamped by teachers, if they were made, as they should be, available for the training of all careers in life. It was for this, among other reasons, that he seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Training of Teachers is a matter of national concern, and the cost of such training, so far as it falls on public funds, should be charged on the national exchequer."—(*Mr. Henry Hobhouse.*)

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.) said he was in agreement with the mover, and in particular with the seconder, of the Motion, and they would understand that the Amendment he had on the Paper was not hostile to the Motion just moved. His Amendment was to make the Motion read that the greater part of the cost of the training of teachers should be charged on the national exchequer. His position was that if they were to provide further facilities for the training of adult teachers, then the State would have to pay the great bulk of the cost. It would be fatal to localise the teachers, who would become, as the hon. Member for the London University said, provincial professional prigs; but a margin of the cost should be left to be paid by the locality. The proposal that the whole cost should be paid by the State was utterly impossible since the Act of 1902. The position had changed since the Act of 1902, which provided that any local authority could on its own initiative build training colleges, and spend money right and left, and then, according to his right hon. friend's Motion, go to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and ask him to pay the bill. That was an absolutely impossible proposition. No Chancellor of the Exchequer could, under any circumstances, agree to that suggestion; and, as long as the Act of 1902 gave this free hand to the local authorities, so long must the locality find at least a smaller margin than at present of the cost of the institutions. There was a dearth of training facilities for teachers, and the present authorities could not do all that was required in respect of the training of adult teachers with the present grants from the Exchequer. As a proof of the dearth of present teaching facilities, he would take the result of the King's College Examination for scholarships. Only one in seventy male pupils, and one in a hundred female pupils, succeeded in gaining a scholarship; and the result was that 6,902 young people, having completed their apprenticeship and passed into the first or second class, had a right to complete their preparatory career in a training college. But there were only 2,813 places in these colleges, so that over 4,000 who had the right to a training college training, were unable to obtain it. To call that a provision for the training of teachers was an absolute sham, delusion, and snare. He knew the case of a young man who had taken a very high place in a provincial college, and who applied for admission to the Cheltenham Training College, which was almost entirely supported out of public funds. The answer he received to his application was—"Accept if Churchman, or willing to conform. Wire reply to the Principal of the college." The Motion of his right hon. friend would throw the entire cost of such an institution on the public exchequer. He did not know whether his right hon. friend considered that, or whether he considered that this gentleman ought to be placed in a position of being tempted to conform to the Church of England in order to utilise the scholarship he had earned by the distinguished position he won in the King's Scholarship Examination. With such a large number of successes and such a comparatively small number of places, many of which were set round with denominational tests, it must be clear that there must be greater provision for the training of teachers than there was at present. He thought it was obvious that such a telegram as he had read ought not to have been received as a preliminary to the enjoyment of a King's Scholarship. At any rate that King's scholar ought to have got admission under a conscience clause. But, apart from that, the question was whether the localities could find the money to provide the additional training accommodation that was necessary. He did not think they could. There must be more money from the Exchequer.

* He did not think that the Chairman of the Somerset Education Committee treated the local education authorities justly in this matter. He had been profoundly struck by the magnificent efforts made by the local authorities, under very great strain and under great difficulties, in the direction of securing means for the proper training of pupil teachers. He had a complete list of what had been accomplished in this particular direction, and it showed a remarkable desire, in Somerset particularly, by bursaries and other schemes to induce young people to become teachers; and he thought that the work of the local authorities, considering the struggles of the education committees to overtake the serious condition into which the voluntary schools had fallen, showed a most admirable advance. In Manchester they had one of the most remarkable schemes for the training of pupil teachers in this country. But what the local authorities could now do was to tackle the question of the training of adult teachers with the money at present at their disposal. Manchester would during the course of this year open two new

colleges, one for men and the other for women. The eastern counties were now in conference with a view to devising a scheme for the opening of a training college for teachers; a training college for teachers would be opened in Hereford in September; Cambridge had also a scheme in hand; and Lancashire and Cheshire were in consultation with reference to the establishment of a training college. But they must have further aid from the State if the thing was to be done properly; and he would suggest to the Parliamentary Secretary that the local authorities should be given very large aid in regard to the building of new colleges. If the Board could see its way, after consultation with the Treasury, to provide further money for the building of colleges that would be a very considerable advance indeed.

In addition, he would urge that there was a very great shortage as regarded male teachers. They would always be able to get plenty of girls, because the elementary school teaching profession was a first-class opening for any young girl, and the ultimate prospects was quite admirable. Not so, however, for boys. He himself put before the Parliamentary Secretary the other day a letter written by the corresponding manager of an education committee to an applicant for a head-mastership in a public elementary school, in which the applicant was asked if he knew anything of the organ. The letter added that the present master played the organ, and for that and for looking after the lamps he received a small annual payment of £4. That would also be open to his successor; the letter adding that it was a private matter and not a condition of employment. The letter also said that the wife of the present master acted as caretaker. They would have to get away from the idea of treating public elementary school teachers as trimmers of lamps. Of course the teacher's *status* would be what he himself made it; but if he were to be looked upon in the social fabric as a trimmer of lamps at £4 a year, with his wife as a caretaker, they would not get boys to enter the teaching profession. The boys would enter commercial life instead, and at the end of their careers they would be much more successful than if they had been pupil teachers. He thought that the local authorities themselves should resent that kind of communication and should insist on a different *status* being given to teachers. Then as to the question of emolument, even teachers had to live. In Somerset a headmaster, college trained, and a certificated teacher, who was in control of a public elementary school with an attendance between fifty-one and 120 children, received £90 a year, and had the ultimate prospect of looking forward at the end of his career to a magnificent salary of £130 a year. They might spend what money they liked on the training of teachers, but they would not get the best material if at the early stages of their career teachers were placed on a plateau from which they could never rise beyond £3 a week. He would not press that. He had some delicacy in pressing it. He had been an elementary school teacher himself; and, therefore, he felt some difficulty in pressing the claims of his *confrères*, but he was assured of this, that no matter what facilities they offered, unless the *status* of the teacher were improved, and unless he were given a salary that would enable him to maintain the dignity which the Secretary to the Board of Education particularly desired to associate with the office of teacher, they would not get the right material for this great work. He agreed that greater facilities were needed; he agreed there was a great shortage; he agreed that the State ought to do more; he agreed that the State might very well find building grants for new colleges; but he entirely disagreed to giving the local authorities the right to open these institutions and then turn to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and ask him to find all the money. It was because of that and because he felt that in spirit he was with the mover of the Motion that he ventured to ask the House to accept the Amendment.

MR. GEORGE WHITE (Norfolk, N.W.) said he desired to second the Amendment; and he did so not because there was any difference between his hon. friend and the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Motion but because he thought the Motion should have indicated something in the direction of the Amendment. He was one of those who felt that anything almost that could be done by the national exchequer towards the erection and maintenance of training colleges should be done. At the same time he thought it was most desirable that the local authorities should contribute some small moiety of the expense, in order that any disposition to lavishness might be checked. He did not think anything was more important or more pressing in connection with education at the present moment than the question of additional facilities for the training of teachers. Under the Act of 1870 large provision was made for the extension of elementary education; but no corresponding provision was made for the training of the teachers which that extension required. The Act of 1902 did make some provision, and the Prime Minister anticipated great things from that Act, which had not yet been fulfilled, and consequently very little had been actually accomplished. He admitted, however, that there were movements on the part of the local authorities which had not yet taken effect to any great extent, and he did not anticipate that they would take any great effect in consequence of the enormous expenditure that would be likely to accrue. The position, therefore, was this. There was undoubtedly a scarcity of teachers for elementary schools. Every hon. Member who was concerned with education in any part of the country would know that there was not an adequate supply of trained teachers. In his own county he feared that they had a somewhat unenviable reputation for the employment of Article 68 teachers; but even when the local authorities were desirous of superseding these teachers by superior teachers they could not get them, and the expense on the locality of building and maintaining a training college was one which he thought the local authorities would not like to incur in many instances. His other point was that, even with a group of counties such as East Anglia, they could not locate the teachers, after going to the expense of training them. Other counties might get the advantage of that expense, and, consequently, with the pressure which primary education was now putting on the rates, he was quite sure that very few local authorities would have the spirit, he might almost say the hardihood, to impose on the rates the additional expense of a training college.

Another reason which pressed on him quite as much as the educational reason was that they wanted national training colleges instead of denominational training colleges. If the colleges were built by the Exchequer, and were maintained under the Act of 1902, they would be free, of course, from the tests which so unfortunately hampered the training of teachers in these days. Within the last fortnight in his own constituency a case came to his knowledge similar to the case quoted by his hon. friend. A young girl who won a King's Scholarship was for some reason or other admitted to the Diocesan Training College at Norwich. She remained there a week, and was then dismissed, because she would not conform. The president of the college wrote to a local newspaper a letter in which, after sneering at Nonconformists, he said that he saved the girl from violating her own conscience. The blame in such cases attached to those who tempted young girls to enter those colleges. Other girls who were inferior to the young girl in question were admitted to the college, and her prospects would suffer because she could not be trained in that college. Therefore, he thought it was desirable that they should receive some assurance from the Secretary to the Board of Education that at least the Board would consider this question as of very pressing importance in the educational interests of the nation. He was quite sure these educational interests would suffer very severely indeed. They were suffering at the present time, they would suffer more severely as interest in education increased, unless adequate provision were made for the training of teachers, and therefore he thought that the greater part of the expense should be a national charge. It would be to the greatest interests of education, and the Secretary to the Board would earn the gratitude of every educationist if he would use his great influence to secure that result.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 2, to insert after the word 'and' the words 'the greater part of.'"—(*Dr. Macnamara.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University) said he thought hon. Members were all agreed that the Education Act had thrown a great burden upon the local educational authorities, not merely in administration, but in finance, and that they had grappled with that burden to the best of their power during the twelve or fifteen months for which the Act had been in operation. But he thought it would be unfortunate if, under the immediate pressure of these new burdens, they were tempted to cast aside responsibilities which they ought to undertake and opportunities which they might be unable to recall, such as the provision of the training of teachers within their area. Everyone admitted that there was a great dearth of training colleges. Hitherto these colleges had been founded by private enterprise in connection with denominations who interested themselves in elementary teaching; and that was the occasion of those denominational tests which hon. Gentlemen opposite regretted, and which he also regretted, because he desired to see opportunities of full training in teaching thrown open to members of all denominations. He regretted that those opportunities were limited, though he could not complain that those who had found the buildings and started the enterprise should require the conditions which had been read out. As regarded these training colleges, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Somerset thought that the Board of Education had imposed new requirements, and that consequently further assistance would be necessary. He admitted that the Board of Education had imposed new requirements with regard to pupil teachers, but as regarded training colleges the matter stood precisely as it was when the Education Act came into force. What were the circumstances, and what was the amount of assistance which the Government gave to training colleges which were founded by local authorities or private enterprise? The Government paid 75 per cent. of the cost of the students, and that sum, paid by the Government, covered the students' instruction and board. There remained the upkeep of the building and the provision of the furniture. He thought he was right in saying that in every residential college the fees and the grant covered the whole expenditure apart from the provision of the fabric. He was not quite sure whether his right hon. friend really suggested that the whole expenditure should be taken off the hands of the local authorities and be provided by the Government; but he would ask was it desirable to take this responsibility from the local authorities? Was it not desirable that they should have the margin indicated in the Amendment? The county of Hereford had started a training college, which would be thrown open in September, Lancashire and Cheshire were, he believed, combining in the matter of training teachers, and Manchester and the neighbouring towns were entering into a similar combination. He believed, also, that he was right in saying that the counties of Wales, were it not for the unfortunate differences over which the House spent so much time on the previous evening, were ready with a scheme for a joint committee, one of whose duties would be this particular duty of undertaking the training of teachers. It appeared to him to be of the utmost importance that this responsibility should still rest on the local authorities. What was wanted was variety of effort and experiment; and that could only be provided if the various local authorities developed their different views, out of which they might hope to obtain possibly an ideal system, or even more than one ideal system. His right hon. friend had suggested that the Board of Education contemplated forcing the local authorities to provide such colleges.

MR. HENRY HOBHOUSE: I asked whether you were prepared to do so.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said the Board of Education was certainly not prepared to do what the law did not justify and what common sense did not suggest; but they were urging the local authorities in every way to interest themselves in this matter by taking stock of the probable requirements of their area in respect of teachers and to prepare for the future by providing for a sufficient number of pupil teachers within their areas. They were also urging them to try to obtain promising boys and girls to enter the teaching profession. Let them use their local influence to induce boys and girls to enter a profession which he was afraid did not at present offer a sufficient inducement to the boys of this country. But turning from the purely educational side of the matter, he would point out that great difficulty might arise if the Resolution were adopted. The education authority must, from year to year, take stock of the requirements as regards teachers within their area, and apart from the automatic increase of the grant which would follow from the payment for the training of teachers, they would be able to come to the Treasury and say, "We want so much accommodation for teachers." It might be impossible to forecast from year to year the demands which might be made on the Treasury for the construction or improvement of buildings if the whole cost of the provision of colleges were thrown on the central Government. Further than that there was the difficulty, of retaining the services of the experienced teacher, by the person who paid for his training. As a matter of fact the Government now paid for the training of the teachers, and all the local authority had to do was to provide the buildings for training purposes. In order to retain the teachers, the local authorities should combine so as to have an area large enough to allow a teacher to move about, and not to spend the whole of his time in one small circle, narrowing himself by constant contact with the same individuals; that at any rate would help to retain them in the teaching profession. Another growing difficulty in the Board of Education was the wastage of teachers whom it was impossible to keep in the teaching profession, although the Exchequer paid for their training. If the local authorities took pains to find among the boys and girls in the combined area children who were likely to remain in the teaching profession and would bind them to remain in a certain area, there would be no hardship on the teacher so bound and no difficulty imposed on the local authority. The difficulty in his opinion was not so great as his right hon. friend suggested. The right hon. Gentleman included the whole pupil teacher system in his desire to throw the burden of payment on the Government.

Mr. HENRY HOBHOUSE: No, I quoted the regulations to show that they aggravated the difficulty of the whole training question.

***Sir WILLIAM ANSON** said there was no doubt that the new regulations for pupil teachers had considerably raised the cost of the pupil teacher system. The hon. Member for the University of London had spoken of the danger of the teacher becoming affected with priggism. Well, the idea of these regulations was that the pupil teacher should be compelled to pass a certain portion of his time at a secondary school where he could mix with boys and girls not all entering the same profession, and that would go some way towards diminishing the danger of the evil referred to by his hon. friend. As to the amount of the contribution which would be made by the Board towards the cost of the training of the pupil teacher he might say that, whereas as the regulations now stood the boy or girl at a preparatory class received £2 a year for two years, he would hereafter receive £4 a year for two years. The meaning of a preparatory class extended to a secondary school which was not receiving the A or B grant under the secondary school regulations. The boy or girl at a recognised pupil teacher centre who now received £3 a year would receive £6 a year. In doubling these grants, the Board, it would be seen, were doing something to relieve the local bodies of the charge thrown upon them by the pupil teacher regulations. This pupil teacher question was the main difficulty of their education system, for unless they could prepare the children properly during the period of life between their leaving the elementary school and their entering the training college, they were wasting money at both ends, for if they were unfit to reap the benefit of the training college, when they came out of it they could not repay the country in teaching the enormous sums expended on their education. The problem of the training of pupil teachers was one of the most important which could engage local knowledge and interest; and he should be sorry to remove that interest from the local authority by throwing the whole thing into the hands of the Board of Education. He anticipated that his right hon. friend would not be satisfied with what he had said, and he might observe, in the presence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that this was not a good time for asking for any further contributions from the Treasury; but he could say that some assistance would be given in the matter of building grants. Further than that he could not go. Feeling so strongly as he did, on educational grounds, the extreme undesirability of removing this question from the purview of the local authorities, and taking away from the interest they now had in the training of pupil teachers, he must express his personal intention to vote against the Motion and in favour of the Amendment.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said the discussion in which they were engaged was very typical of the House of Commons. They constantly heard pleas for greater economy, yet that day they had debated several questions, the object of which was to press upon the Government to spend enormously increased sums of money. In the afternoon they had before them a proposal to expend three or four hundred thousand pounds for one purpose only, and now they were inviting Ministers to throw upon Imperial taxation the whole cost of the training of teachers. He must say that, in his opinion, they were running to extreme lengths in this matter, because they were paying the dividends of private education companies. If they went on in this way he feared they would produce a reaction against education itself. He had spent the greater part of his life in the Education Department, and he was somewhat interested and amused to hear his right hon. friend talk about the objection of raising money from the rates because of the unpopularity and odium caused thereby. Why should they, for the simple reason that they feared unpopularity, throw their burden upon that unfortunate person, the Chancellor of the Exchequer? If that right hon. Gentleman really wished to be straightforward, he would tell hon. Members that he would grant their request, but they must be prepared in return to assent to a half-crown income-tax. Let them open their eyes to what their proposals would cost the country. It was of no use hon. Gentlemen accusing the Government of being extravagant when every time there was a possibility of spending money they came forward with demands for increased expenditure. The hon. Member for Camberwell had spoken of the teaching profession as a first-rate opening for girls, although he had suggested that it was not quite so good for boys. He ventured to differ from him on that point. But even if it were only a first-rate opening for girls surely it was reasonable that a profession which was becoming an enormous profession should do something for itself and not depend solely on being trained by the State. There were many other professions of great value to the community, such as the medical and the legal, the members of which trained themselves, and he could not see why the profession of teaching should continue to have a sort of eleemosynary system of training. It was time the profession was taught that it was its duty to pay for its own training. As he had previously stated, this debate constituted a typical example of the way in which the House of Commons continually urged increased expenditure, and, directly it was granted, turned round and accused the Government of the day of unduly swelling the Estimates. He protested against this proposed enormous increase of expenditure. He did not wish to say anything against the speech of the Secretary to the Board of Education, but he was bound to confess that to him it appeared to be a trimming sort of speech. The hon. Gentleman said he wished the locality to continue to pay some portion of the cost, but still they were going to throw some of the expense of building on the Government. That was a wobbly sort of idea, and he thought the hon. Gentleman ought to have had the pluck to say that, in the present state of the

Exchequer, and in view of the enormous increase of taxation, the time was not ripe for increasing burdens of this sort, but that when it was possible to cut other expenditure down so as to leave a margin he might then perhaps think of trying to meet their views. He was afraid that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be a much older man than he now was before he could find a margin for this purpose. In the name of economy he protested against throwing upon the Imperial Exchequer expenditure which should properly be met either out of local rates or by the individual directly benefited.

MR. CHARLES ALLEN (Gloucestershire, Stroud) contended that to put sectarian tests on clever young men and women who were willing to serve the State as teachers was grossly unjust, and he ventured to assert that when the Liberal Party came into power it would have to do its best to alter that state of things. He gave two illustrations to bear out his argument. In the first place he pointed out that in the case of Culham College the total amount spent in the year 1901–2 was £5,797 18s. 11d. Of that amount the students of the college provided £1,110; the Government grant amounted to £4,453; the Diocesan Board found £180 only; the voluntary contributions amounted to £53, and 2s. was obtained from other sources. Yet to get into that college the pupils had to pass a religious test—a Church of England test. Then there was the case of the Women's College at Oxford. In the year 1901–2 the students found £510, the Government grant was £1,290, and the Diocesan Board only contributed £117. There, again, they had a religious test.

Sir George Bartley.

*__SIR W. HART DYKE__ (Kent, Dartford) said that although the House generally was in favour of economy there were considerations which should commend the present proposal to their attention. An Act had been passed throwing a heavy burden, both administrative and pecuniary, upon the local authorities. Probably not a single Member supposed that the initial training of pupil teachers would mean an expenditure of £14,000 or £15,000 to any single county; therefore the training question might be said to have been sprung upon the local authorities. Pupil teacher training was the most important part of the training of teachers, for if the supply of pupil teachers was checked the Act would break down. All he pleaded for was that, in view of the extreme importance of the question, and the fact that the matter had been forced upon the local authorities, some relief should be given, especially in the initial stages of the training. He agreed with the hon. Member for North Camberwell that a portion of the charge should rest upon the locality, but they ought not to be asked to spend large sums of money unassisted when there was no guarantee that they would reap the result of that expenditure. In the interests of education and of the efficient working of the Act it was essential that some inducement should be offered to local authorities to take up this work. It came under the portion of the Act dealing with higher education, and there would be a great temptation to the local authorities not to administer those provisions of the Act unless some assistance was given to teacher training. A distinction should be drawn between pupil teacher training and training colleges themselves. Once a training college was established he believed that with the Government grant and the fees of students it could, if well administered, be made to pay financially, but the provision of sites and the building of the college was a great obstacle in the way. A sympathetic reply had been given and consideration promised, but what was wanted was a recognition of the principle that, in the present grave position of affairs, something more than sympathy should be given, and that a considerable addition to the help already granted should be made.

*SIR E. DURNING-LAWRENCE (Cornwall, Truro) said that if any county was endeavouring to carry out the Education Act in an equitable manner it was the County of Cornwall. The county contained a large number of dissenters, and while he had testimony that the Act was being carried out in the most admirable spirit, supporters and opponents alike looked to the Government to ensure that the children who had an aptitude for the teaching profession should be enabled to enter training colleges without having to submit to religious tests. He was pledged to do all he could to secure that the children of dissenters should have the right to be trained in a training college free from such tests, and he hoped the matter would not be lost sight of, as it really demanded the most earnest attention of the Government.

MR. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock) desired, as a member of an education authority which was making liberal provision for the training of pupil teachers, to support the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Somerset. The Secretary to the Board of Education had made some movement towards meeting the needs of the case, but, having regard to all the circumstances, he had not gone far enough. The requirements as to the non-employment of monitors and so forth, entailed upon the Board the necessity of giving further assistance in the provision of pupil teachers. The uncertainty of retaining pupil teachers when they had been trained would greatly deter local authorities from incurring serious outlay for equipment, and the fact that the teachers would freely pass from one district to another was a reason for a large share of the cost being paid out of Imperial rather than local funds. Education, being a national responsibility, should be paid for by the State. There might be some question as to the application of that principle to current expenditure, but certainly the equipment of teachers for the fulfilment of their duty was a matter of national concern and national responsibility and ought to be paid for by the nation. He desired to ask whether there was anything to prevent teachers, after they had been trained, leaving the teaching profession and entering other occupations; if not, that would be an additional deterrent to local authorities making the necessary outlay. He thought a good case had been made out for further concessions in this matter.

*MR. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley) was understood to urge that it would be a mistake to attempt to keep teachers to particular localities; they ought rather to change from district to district, and so come into touch with different descriptions of life and people. Pupil teacher centres, supported by the rates, were doing a good work, and supplying a want which had been long felt by the teaching world. But they were only partly fulfilling a national purpose; a national system of education was desired; and it was only fair that Government assistance should be given to render the efficiency of the teaching more complete. Uniformity, efficiency, and continuity were necessary in the training, so that when a teacher moved from one place to another it would not be necessary to upset the whole curriculum of the schools. There was a danger of officialism becoming too prominent in education; he hoped there would be sufficient interest taken in the question in the country to prevent such a misfortune. The Board of Education appeared hardly to realise the position of some of the county councils. Rightly or wrongly, Parliament had ordered them to take over the work of education, but no provision had been made for seeing that the teachers were properly qualified for their work. He cordially supported the Resolution.

*Mr. TALBOT (Oxford University) expressed satisfaction with the tone of the debate, and said the Secretary to the Board of Education had given them all the encouragement that he could be expected to give. Nobody desired to place unnecessary burdens on the Exchequer, but it was unjust for the State to impose heavy obligations upon the local authorities as they had done in this matter of providing for the training of teachers, and then to refuse to assist them to carry them out. That was his answer to his right hon. friend the Member for Bristol, who complained that too much demand was being made upon the Treasury. That being so, the claim of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Somerset was a very fair one. The hon. Member for North Camberwell was largely in agreement, but thought the right hon. Gentleman was going a little too far, and that some margin should be left for the local authority to provide. He entirely agreed with that view, and would suggest that his right hon. friend should accept the Amendment. He presumed the Government would not refuse the Motion as amended, and thus they would have it on record that this matter had a claim upon both rates and taxes. Training colleges in the past had been distinctly established as denominational institutions, and they could not be allowed to pass into the hands of the State without a recognition of that fact.

Mr. HENRY HOBHOUSE said that after the statement of the Government he was prepared to accept the Amendment.

Amendment put, and agreed to.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, the Training of Teachers is a matter of national concern, and the greater part of the cost of such training, so far as it falls on public funds, should be charged on the National Exchequer.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTORATE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday next.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 16th March, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Littlestone-on-sea and District Water Bill; as amended, considered; to be read the third time.

PETITIONS.

LICENSED PREMISES (HOURS OF CLOSING).

Petition from Woolwich, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law: from Aberdeen; Upton Cross; Bridge of Weir; Grantham; Ysbytty Ifan; Pontygwaith; Derby; Dean Row; Boston; Llanelly; Treherbert; Styal; Ferndale; Cardiff; Bethania; Merthyr Fall; Llantwit Vardre; Gyffylliog; Falmouth; Hove; Cheadle; St. Albans; Machen; and Birmingham; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE.

Petitions for extension to women; from Cradley Heath; and Leicester; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.

Petitions against: from Stratford; Canton; Cardiff; Glasgow (four); Coventry; and Hull; to lie upon the Table.

SAVINGS BANKS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Montrose, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOUR ORDINANCE).

Petition from Shanklin, for withdrawal; to lie upon the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP (FLAX AND LINEN MILLS).

Copy presented, of Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Commander H. P. Smith, one of His Majesty's Superintending Inspectors of Factories, upon the condicions of work in Flax and Linen Mills as affecting the health of the operatives employed therein [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3126 and 3127 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).

Copy presented, of Colonial Report, No. 414 (Jamaica, Report for 1902–3) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Accounts of General Lighthouse Fund.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): To ask the President of the Board of Trade when the accounts of the General Lighthouse Fund, to which attention has been directed by the hon. J. C. Burns, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, will be presented to Parliament.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The account of the General Lighthouse Fund for the last year (1902–3) was presented to Parliament on 2nd February last.

London County Council Electorate.

MR. H. C. RICHARDS (Finsbury, E.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can state approximately the number of electors qualified to vote for the County Council in the county of London; males; females; ratepayers who pay their rates directly to the local authorities; and residents and lodgers whose rates are paid on their behalf by the landlord or other person respectively; and if such figures cannot be supplied, will he give facilities for such a Return to be made so far as the county of London is concerned.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) According to a statement published by the London County Council in May, 1903, the number of electors qualified to vote for county councillors in the county was 723,080. A Return presented to the House of Commons in 1897 shows that at that time the number of women electors in that county was 85,075. I have no later information on this point. The number of electors registered as lodgers on the register now in force in London appears to be 70,549. I am unable to say what number of the electors pay their rates directly to the local authorities or what is the number of those whose rates are paid on their behalf. There would be a considerable difficulty in obtaining this information.

Aid Grants for Scotch Schools.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Secretary for Scotland how many schools earned money out of the Aid Grant under Section 1 (a), (b), and (c), of the Minute of 28th May, 1903; how much money was earned by them; and in what counties the schools were situated.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) Up to the present date, 347 schools have earned grants under Section 1 of the Minute. These grants amounted to £13,850, and the only counties in which none of the schools are situated are Bute and Clackmannan.

Shanghai and Nanking Railway.

MR. BAIRD (Glasgow, Central): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the conditions under which the concession for the Shanghai to Nanking Railway was extended to the British and Chinese Corporation have been fulfilled, the work begun, and the capital provided.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The British and Chinese Corporation are at present discussing with the Chinese Board of Commissioners the necessary arrangements with a view to the flotation of the loan and the commencement of contruction.

Foreign Ministries of Commerce.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now in a position to lay before the House the reports as to the constitution and functions of Foreign Ministries of Commerce.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) No, reports will be laid in a few days.

Postal Cash-on-Delivery System.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he has reason to anticipate that if a postal system of cash-on-delivery were introduced, it would be found to be of sufficient use to the community to ensure the creation of any large amount of traffic, and whether he can give any estimate of the traffic expected.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley*). I am unable to furnish the hon. Member with any estimate the accuracy of which could be relied on. The statistics, however, relative to the working of the system in the various foreign countries in which it has been established, furnish some rough indication. Thus it may be stated approximately that—In Germany, with a population of about 56,000,000, there were, in 1902, 37,500,000 postal packets, letters, and parcels dealt with under the system. The total of the trade charges on this traffic amounted to 648,500,000 marks, or about £32,000,000. In Belgium, with a population of about 7,000,000, there were, in 1901, 128,000 letters and parcels dealt with under the system. The total of the trade charges on this traffic amounted to nearly 2,000,000 francs, or £80,000. In Switzerland, with a population of about 3,000,000, there were dealt with about 9,250,000 letters and parcels, on which the trade charges amounted to nearly 68,000,000 francs, or about £2,720,000. In Austria-Hungary, with a population of about 46,000,000, the number of trade charge letters and parcels dealt with in 1902 was over 12,000,000, and the trade charges exceeded 204,000,000 crowns, or over £80,000,000. In India, the number of trade charge articles of all kinds dealt with during the year 1902 was about 3,340,000, the total trade charges being over 40,000,000 rupees.

Duties of Telegraphists at Leeds.

MR. BARRAN (Leeds, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the recent practice of altering the duties of telegraphists in Leeds at a moment's notice, and to the fact that clerks performing early duties have been directed, at the expiration of a few hours work, to leave the office and return to complete their eight hours in the evening; and, it so, whether, seeing the inconvenience thus caused, he will direct that this action shall be discontinued.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) My attention has not been called to the practice at Leeds to which the hon. Member refers; but I will have inquiry made, and let him know the result.

Sea Carriage of Grain.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state how many vessels registered in the United Kingdom are fitted for the carriage of grain in accordance with Board of Trade regulations.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) There are at present 1,051 vessels on the British register for which plans of grain loading have been approved by the Board of Trade under Section 453 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894.

Rent Aid for Metropolitan Police.

CAPTAIN BALFOUR (Middlesex, Hornsey): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will consider the expediency of revising the scheme of rent-aid for the Metropolitan Police, in view of the inequalities which arise under the present system, and of the difficulty experienced by constables in finding suitable accommodation for themselves and their families within convenient reach of their stations.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) This subject has engaged the special attention of the Home Office during the recess, and after prolonged inquiry and consideration I have, on the recommendation of the Commissioner of Police, decided on a revision of the existing system. The result of the inquiries which I directed to be made was to prove clearly the existence of the inequality which the present system endeavours to remedy—the rents paid by the police for poor accommodation in the centre of London being considerably higher than those paid for good accommodation in the outer district; but it also appeared that the boundary within which the rent-aid is now given is not satisfactory and gives rise to striking anomalies and cases of hardship. I came to the conclusion that it would be fair to fix a certain proportion of pay which an officer might reasonably be expected to afford for rent, and to allow rent-aid to all who have necessarily to pay a rent in excess of that proportion. I propose, therefore, to give rent-aid to all constables and sergeants (below the rank of station sergeant) who are occupying suitable quarters near their station and who are necessarily paying rents exceeding one-fifth of the average pay of their rank, *i.e.*, rents of 6s. or more in the case of constables and of 7s. 6d. or more in the case of sergeants. On this basis the rent-aid system will be extended to the whole Metropolitan Police area, and nearly all the married men in the force will receive an allowance. At the same time I propose to increase the rent-aid allowance in the centre—giving an allowance of 2s. 6d. a week in the four congested central divisions, and 2s. in certain other districts where the prevailing rents are high. For the rest of the police area, including all the outer districts which have hitherto been excluded, the rate will be 1s. 6d.

Equipment Allowances for Military Officers on Tibetan Mission.

MR. BUCHANAN: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether allowances for the necessary equipment could be given to the military officers on the Tibetan Mission similar to those paid to the civilian members of the staff.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) I am informed by the Government of India that the officers of the escort have received and will receive all the advantages allowed under the regulations. A special outfit allowance was granted, as an exceptional measure, to the small body of officers, both civil and military, who were originally attached to the Mission, but there is thought to be no sufficient reason for extending this concession to the much larger number of officers of the escort which was subsequently added.

Forestry Education in Ireland.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how much money the Board of Agriculture for Ireland has spent for the furtherance of forestry education and on the development of afforestation in Ireland under Section 30 of the Act constituting that body; how much, if any, it is intended to spend in these matters during the coming financial year; if it is proposed to acquire any land for these purposes; and if the Department would consider the desirability of purchasing waste lands for planting under the operation of Section 4 of the Land Purchase Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Department has expended about £900 on a survey of the conditions of woods and plantations in Ireland and the prospects of forestry development. This survey, which is supplementary to the recent inquiry by the Committee on Forestry of the Board of Agriculture, on which the Department was represented, is intended to guide the Department in its policy with regard to forestry work and education. As a result of the information obtained the Department has selected and purchased an estate in county Wicklow, specially suited for the purpose, as a nucleus for a school of practical forestry. It is not yet possible to say what sum will be devoted to forestry education in the coming financial year. The question of acquiring as trustees parcels of estates containing land suitable for tree planting which may come into the hands of the Estates Commissioners under the Act of 1903 is engaging the attention of the Department in consultation with the Estates Commissioners.

Licence Duties for Conveyances in Dublin.

Mr. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he will state what was the gross amount of licence duties paid in the Dublin Metropolitan Police district for the current year for licences for hackney cars and cabs, for trams, for stage coaches, job carriages and horses of same, for drivers and conductors, the amount paid in respect of each class, and the funds to which such licence duties are applied.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The proceeds of the Carriage Revenue, applied in aid of the expenses of the Dublin Metropolitan Police establishment, amounted to £3,640 7s. 6d. in the year ended 31st December, 1903. The receipts under each heading were as follows:—Stage carriages, £1,040; job carriages (two-horse), £460; job carriages (one-horse), £132 10s.; job horses, £20; hackney carriages, £1,077; cabriolets, £673; supplemental licences, £1 15s.; transfers of licences, £10 10s.; Dublin plates, £11 2s.; drivers' and conductors' licences, £214 10s. 6d.; Total, £3,640 7s. 6d.

Salary of Principal Teacher in Berrings National School.

Mr. SHEEHAN (Cork Co., Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the principal teacher of the Berrings Male National School obtained second class in 1897, subsequently entered training in 1899, and passed with special distinction in column 3 in 1900; will he say if this teacher was then entitled to first class; and, if not, when would he had the old rules remained in force, and would he be entitled to first class salary now; and whether, seeing that the new rules state expressly that teachers in training during the session 1899–1900 would be specially considered when their salaries came to be revised, and that this teacher has suffered substantial pecuniary loss by the introduction of the new rules, he will give his case special consideration.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) This teacher was placed in the second division of second class in 1897; he entered training in 1899, and in 1900 was advanced to the first division of the second class in accordance with rules then in force. Under these rules he would have been entitled to rank in the first class after the lapse of two years of highly efficient service. He became a principal teacher from 1st May, 1903. Consideration of the question of an increase to the salary he had been previously receiving was deferred until he had served a year's probation as principal in conformity with the regulations on the subject. It will be reconsidered at the termination of that period.

Irish Land Act—Prices of Land.

Mr. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what has been the highest and lowest prices in years purchase of first and second-term rents respectively sanctioned for the purchase of Irish land, under the new Land Act; also the average number of years' purchase sanctioned for first and second-term rents respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Under Section 23 (14) of the Act of 1903 periodical reports of the proceedings of the Estates Commissioners will be laid before Parliament. The form of the report and the date of its publication must be determined in consultation with the Treasury. I am considering the question of publishing an interim Return containing information on the matters referred to.

Indian Army—New Field Guns—Proportion to be Contracted for by Private Firms.

Mr. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state what proportion of the new field guns for the Army in India included in the Estimates of the present year will be manufactured in the Royal Arsenal, and what proportion will be contracted for by private firms.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) This matter is under consideration.

Leather Bandoliers for Volunteers.

Sir JOHN LENG: To ask the Secretary of State for War why the Volunteer Forces in this country are still equipped with the old Crimean ball pouches; whether there is any intention to supply them with leather bandoliers instead of the cotton bandoliers which proved so wasteful of cartridges in the South African War; and when this is to be done.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The question of the abolition of pouches and the introduction of bandoliers or other means of carrying ammunition in clips or chargers will be considered when the new rifle is introduced both for Regulars and Auxiliary Forces. The equipment of the Volunteers is supplied by the corps out of its Capitation Grant.

Troops Controlled by Departments other than War and India Offices.

Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state what, apart from the special arrangements of the Somali campaign, is the number and cost of the forces having an organisation in troops or battalions or gun detachments, now under the control of the Colonial Office and Foreign Office respectively, or under the control of His Majesty's Government exercised otherwise than through the War Office or the Government of India.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) According to the latest available information the figures are as follows:—

	Number. — Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and Men.	Cost. — (Estimated.)
		£
Under the control of the Colonial Office	17,193	2,078,650
Under the control of the Foreign Office	4,906	198,500
Under other Departments (excluding forces under War Office or the Government of India).	Nil.	Nil.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Army Schools.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Chaplain-General to the Forces or the General Officer in command of a District is the recognised authority for detailing a chaplain or officiating clergyman to give specific religious instruction to children attending Army schools; what are the powers of the Chaplain-General in regard to the attendance of children; and whether Inspectors of Army Schools are responsible to the General Officer Commanding or to the Chaplain-General for the subjects on which instruction is given and for the appointment of the instructors.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): In reply to the first point raised, the General Officer Commanding is the authority. As regards the second point raised, the Chaplain-General has no powers. As regards the third point raised, the collective Bible lessons are given by the Army schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, who are appointed by the Director of Army Schools; a printed course of these lessons is issued for their guidance by the War Office.

Protection of Scotch Fisheries.

Mr. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what Admiralty vessels are at present employed in patrolling the fisheries on the coasts of Scotland, and what are their instructions as to enforcing the observation of the three mile limit.

***The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY** (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge): There are no vessels exclusively employed in patrolling these fisheries at the present time, but after the 1st April the special service vessel "Jackal" and her tender "Daisy" will revert to this special duty. Other vessels, both gunboats and coastguard cruisers, are also available when their services are required. The steps taken, when occasion requires, to ensure the observation of the three mile limit are those laid down in the Sea Fisheries Act 1883.

Transvaal Labour Ordinance – Leave Regulations.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that, under the Ordinances governing indentured Asiatic labour in Trindad and British Guiana, the labourers are entitled by law to leave of absence for one day and one night in every fortnight upon their earning certain wages within that time, and that the employer may give the labourer seven days leave at a time and twenty-six days in the year; and seeing that, under the Transvaal Ordinance, Chinese labourers are entirely dependent for leave of absence upon the will of their employers, whether provision will be made for their enjoying the same right to leave of absence as that provided by the Ordinances in Trinidad and British Guiana.

***The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES** (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington): I am aware of the terms of the Ordinances of Trinidad and British Guiana. If it is found by experience that under the provisions of the Ordinance the labourers are dissatisfied in this respect, the necessary remedy can be applied by regulation.

Civil Rights Limitation for Asiatic Labour.

Mr. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether in any of the Laws or Ordinances providing for Asiatic immigration into other parts of the British Empire, there are restrictions similar to those contained in Section 14 of the Transvaal Ordinance debarring Chinese labourers from holding any liquor, mining, trading, general dealer's, importer's, hawker's, or other licence whatever, and making it unlawful for Chinese labourers to acquire, lease, or hold any house, land, building or fixed property, or any claim or any right whatsoever to minerals or precious stones; and, if not, why these precedents are not followed.

***Mr. LYTTELTON**: If the hon. Member wishes for an exhaustive answer I shall have to ask him to postpone his Question; but so far as I am able to answer it at present, I am informed that there are two recent Australian Acts of Parliament which do restrict Asiatic labour from certain employments. The latter part of the Question in regard to precedents is therefore not exactly in point, but there is no precedent for the exact condition or even the general condition of the present Ordinance.

Gold Production of the Rand.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what is the gold production of the Rand for February in quantity and value; and what are the corresponding figures for February, 1903.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The gold production of the Rand for February is given as 282,436 ounces, value £1,199,712. The figures for February 1903 are 186,913 ounces, value £793,955.

MR. BUCHANAN: An increase of 50 per cent.

Crown Colonies and the Sugar Convention.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that bounty-fed sugar from the United States is admitted into Bermuda without a countervailing duty and is superseding British and German sugars exported from the United Kingdom to that island, to the detriment of British trade; and whether he will take steps to have due effect given by the Government of Bermuda to the provisions of the Brussels Convention.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I am aware that there has for some years been a tendency for the exports of sugar from the United States to Bermuda to increase, which, however, is probably due quite as much to the intimate commercial relations existing between the two countries as to any bounties given in the United States. As at present advised, I do not propose to press the Legislature of Bermuda to take any special measures to check such importation, the colony not being a party to the Brussels Convention.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR: Has the Government not guaranteed the adhesion of the Crown Colonies to the Convention?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Did not the Government assume for all the Crown Colonies all the obligations of the Convention? I must really press for a reply.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I quite agree that my hon. friend is entitled to press for a reply, but will he be good enough to put the Question down?

Alien Labour in Southern Rhodesia.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if any regulations now exist as to the employment of alien labour in Rhodesia; if so, will he state their purport.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I am not aware of any rules having been framed under the Southern Rhodesian Ordinance, which has not as yet come into operation.

St. George's Channel, Bermuda.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will confer with the Lords of the Admiralty as to the best means of widening and deepening the waterway of St. George's Channel, Bermuda, in the interest of the commerce of that island.

*MR. LYTTELTON: Tenders are being invited by the Colonial Government for deepening, widening, and improving the channel leading into St. George's harbour. The views of naval officers on the station have been obtained as to the best means of carrying out the work, which is not, however, one in which the Admiralty are directly interested.

Employment of Natives in Indian Administration.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if the late order issued by the Governor-General of India, which curtails competition, applies solely to natives of India; and whether by this order competition is in any way reduced for those offices usually held by Europeans; also if he can state in what departments the new order applies.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I understand that the orders issued by the Government of India refer only to appointments made in India, which are, generally speaking, reserved for natives of that country. They do not apply to offices to which appointments are made after examination in England. In the case of the Indian Civil Service, as the hon. Member is doubtless aware, the procedure of appointment is regulated by Statute (21 and 22 Vict. cap. 106, sec. 32).

Indian Coolie Labour for the Transvaal.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to an enclosure contained in Lord Milner's despatch of the 25th January, 1904, page 15 [Cd. 1941], in which, in a quotation from the *Times* of Natal, it is stated that it was at first hoped that the labour would be forthcoming from India, but the foolish and obstinate attitude of the Indian Government has made that hope a vain one, and that the colony had been forced back, as a last resort, upon the Chinaman; whether he can inform the House as to what was the attitude of the Indian Government which is described as foolish and obstinate; whether there has been any correspondence between the Secretary of State or the Indian Government with reference to the immigration of Indian coolies into the Transvaal Colony; and, if so, whether he will lay the same upon the Table of the House.

MR. BRODRICK: The extract from a Natal newspaper referred to in the Question is entirely unjustified by the facts. The Government of India has never been invited to allow coolies to be recruited for labour in the mines of the Transvaal. Correspondence is proceeding with reference to the position of Indian subjects in the Transvaal and the possibility of recruiting Indian coolies for work on Government railways in that colony, but it has not reached a point at which it would be laid before Parliament.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: Do I understand that no communications have passed between the two Governments with reference to the importation of Indian natives into the Transvaal for mining purposes?

MR. BRODRICK: No correspondence whatever has taken place between the two Governments with reference to the recruitment of Indian coolies for employment in the mines of the Transvaal.

M. Leopold Blairiaux and the Egyptian Government.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that M. Leopold Blairiaux, formerly a judge of the Native Tribunal of First Instance at Cairo, having sued the Egyptian Government for damages for wrongful dismissal from his office in the Mixed Tribunal of First Instance at Cairo, obtained judgment in that Court for £12,000 damages; and, if so, will he say whether, before the dismissal of M. Blairiaux, Lord Cromer was consulted by the Egyptian Minister or the Judicial Adviser; and, whether Lord Cromer advised or concurred in the dismissal of M. Blairiaux.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): The answer to the first paragraph of the Question is in the affirmative, but an appeal has been lodged against the judgment. The action taken by the Egyptian Government with regard to M. Blairiaux was approved by both Lord Cromer and the Judicial Adviser.

Shanghai and Nanking Railway.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that, under an agreement signed by the British and Chinese Corporation, Limited, and the Chinese Government on the 9th July last, the Corporation undertook to provide a capital of £3,250,000 for the construction of the Shanghai and Nanking Railway; will he state whether any steps have yet been taken with a view to raise the required capital; and will he ascertain when the work of construction is likely to be proceeded with.

EARL PERCY: His Majesty's Government are aware of the terms of the agreement as described by the hon. Member. The British and Chinese Corporation are at present discussing with the Chinese Board of Commissioners the necessary arrangements with a view to the flotation of the loan and the commencement of construction.

Balkan Reforms.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devonshire, Honiton): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can state on what date the demands of the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Ambassadors for the reorganisation of the gendarmerie in the Balkan Provinces were presented to the Porte; if he has any official information showing that an early and favourable answer will be returned; and, in the contrary event, will His Majesty's Government, in view of the urgency of the situation and the continuance of outrages, use their utmost influence with the Porte to obtain it; and whether any progress has been made with the appointment of Assessors in Macedonia.

*EARL PERCY: The demands formulated by General de Giorgis for the reorganisation of the Macedonian gendarmerie were presented to the Porte by the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Ambassadors on the 1st of March. His Majesty's Ambassador has strongly urged upon the Turkish Government the immediate acceptance of these demands which have been declared to be the minimum that Great Britain could accept. The Austro-Hungarian and Russian Civil Assessors were appointed in the month of December last and have been engaged since January in elaborating with Hilmi Pacha, the Turkish Inspector-General, the details of the scheme of administrative reforms.

Russia and Persia.

MAJOR EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any official information regarding a Russian expedition to Persia to survey the means of communication between Teheran and Bushire from a standpoint of the transport of merchandise; and, if so, whether he proposes to publish any Papers on the subject.

*EARL PERCY: We have no official information on the subject mentioned by the hon. and gallant Member.

Protection for British Subjects at Newchwang.

MR. CHARLES MCARTHUR: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is intended to recall His Majesty's Gunboat "Espiegle" from Newchwang; and, if so, what steps, if any, is it proposed to take to protect British life and property at that port in the event of the foreign settlements being raided in the act of, or subsequent to, a withdrawal of the Russian troops now located there.

*EARL PERCY: It is intended to withdraw His Majesty's Ship "Espiegle" from Newchwang as soon as the river opens as she would be in considerable danger in the event of serious hostilities and her presence there would afford no effective protection either to life or property. The British and American Consuls have requested all women and children to leave the port, and will, no doubt, if circumstances render it necessary, give similar advice to other British and American nationals. Representations will be addressed by His Majesty's Government to the belligerents, requesting them to take such measures as circumstances may permit of, to safeguard the interests of British subjects.

Somaliland Expenditure.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can say what is the meaning of the proposed grant in aid of military expenses of £24,600 for Somaliland contained in the Estimates for the coming financial year; to what purposes the corresponding grant of £50,000 in the present financial year was applied, and what proportion it proved to be of the total military expenditure incurred.

*EARL PERCY: The grant of £24,600 is to cover (*a*) the cost of the 6th battalion King's African Rifles which forms the normal military force of the

Protectorate (£20,000) and (*b*) Charges for pensions and gratuities (about £4,000) to officers and officers' wives and relations, who were killed or wounded in the recent operations. The grant of £50,000 made in 1903–4 covered (*a*) the cost of the above battalion (about £19,000,) and (*b*) the repayment to India of the amount of expenditure on buildings, works, etc., and other charges (£31,000) for which the Foreign Office became liable on taking over the administration of the Protectorate in 1898.

The Budget.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork County, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state the approximate date of the introduction of the Budget.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): I am unable to state exactly the date at which the Budget will be introduced, but it will not be until after the Easter recess.

Electrification of Metropolitan Railways.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state what progress is being made with the works requisite for the equipment of the Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways with a system of electric traction; and can he state when this system is likely to become generally adopted on these railways, and when the time limit for the completion of the work of electrification will expire.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): Both the railway companies referred to have informed me that the equipment of their lines for electric traction is progressing rapidly, and that they expect to be able to run trains electrically early in next year. There is no statutory limit of time for the completion of the works.

Fishing Industry and Railway Rates.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the Board of Agriculture, whether he is aware that the fishing industry is hampered by the rates charged for the carriage of fish; and will he consider the expediency of addressing a circular letter to the various railway companies with a view to secure a reduction in their charges.

Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): Our concern with matters affecting the industry of fishing is limited to England and Wales, but some evidence has been laid before the President affecting the through rates for fish from Scotland which is receiving the attention of my noble friend.

Mr. Hooley's Bankruptcy.

Mr. LAMBERT: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General if his attention was drawn to paragraph 55 of the Report, dated 16th January, 1899, of Mr. H. Brougham, Official Receiver, alleging that the bankrupt, Mr. E. T. Hooley, had been guilty of fraud in connection with the Beeston Tyre share deal, with a view to moving the Public Prosecutor to action; if so, can he state upon what grounds no prosecution was initiated.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs): This Report formed the subject of very careful consideration in 1899 by the Attorney-General and the Director of Public Prosecutions. Full inquiries were made and the grounds on which proceedings were not taken was that the necessary evidence could not be obtained.

Government Grants to Training Colleges.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education can he state when did the Treasury cease to make building grants to training colleges in Great Britain; and at that date how many training colleges in England and Ireland respectively had received building grants from the Government.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of EDUCATION (Sir William Anson, Oxford University): The Committee of the Council on Education on 21st January, 1860, announced their intention of receiving no further applications for building grants in aid of the erection of training colleges in England, Scotland and Wales. The last grant was actually paid in 1864. Building grants were paid to twenty-nine English training colleges, four Scotch, and three Welsh. I am afraid I have no information as to Ireland.

Domestic Instruction for Highland Girls.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the fact that in the Highlands of Scotland there are no manufacturing industries for the employment of single women, and that a large proportion eventually engage in domestic service, will he consider the desirability of making such arrangements as will enable every girl to pass a course of instruction in domestic work, including plain cooking, during the last few months of her attendance at school.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): The Code already offers ample opportunities for such instruction as the hon. Member desires, in connection with the supplementary courses. One of the courses suggested in the Sixth Schedule to the Code expressly takes that form.

Irish National Teachers.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he say how many teachers under the Irish National Board of Education were promoted to the first grade last month; were any teachers who obtained an increment last July thus promoted; on what reports were the promotions made; and were any teachers passed over without promotion who, during the past three years, had higher reports than those who came off more favourably.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): Eighteen, of whom three had already received partial increments. The promotions were based upon the reports of the inspectors during the past three years, the Departmental records, and the special recommendation of the senior inspectors. No teachers were passed over who were eligible for and merited promotion. If any particular case in which it is considered that a teacher should have been promoted is brought under the notice of the Commissioners, it will be inquired into.

Rifles for the Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is intended to supply the Royal Irish Constabulary with a new pattern rifle and bayonet; and, if so, what will be the estimated cost of the change, and from what Vote will it be defrayed; and whether he can say how many changes in the pattern of the Royal Irish Constabulary rifle have been made since the old Enfield rifle was in use.

MR. WYNDHAM: Arrangements are being made to supply the constabulary with Lee-Enfield Cavalry carbines fitted to take sword bayonets, in place of the Martini-Henry carbines at present in use. The cost of the change is estimated at £4,766, which will be borne by the Constabulary Vote. The present is the third change in the pattern of rifle since the old Enfield rifle was adopted.

MR. FLYNN? Are these weapons intended for police duties?

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Have the Irish Government considered the desirability of disarming the force and putting it on the same level as the English police?

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): Are you going to issue Mark IV bullets to the police?

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork County, E.): For what purpose are these arms used?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The original Question was as to the pattern of rifle, and that has been answered. Notice must be given of any other Question.

Dublin Training Colleges.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state what were the terms of the arrangement by which the present First Lord of the Treasury, in the year 1890, established equality between the Government Training College in Marlborough Street, Dublin, and the training colleges under private management, and since that time from what source has building expenditure been met in the case of Marlborough Street College.

I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state whether, since the settlement made by the present First Lord of the Treasury in the year 1890, any building grants or their equivalent have been made to any training college, denominational or undenominational, in Ireland; and, if not, will he explain why it is proposed now to grant £50,000 for buildings to Marlborough Street College without any corresponding grant to any other college.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The decision arrived at in 1890 by the Irish Government, with the consent of the Treasury, was to place the three Denominational training colleges in Dublin (two Roman Catholic and one Church of Ireland) on an equality of treatment as to building grants, with that previously accorded to the Undenominational training college under the management of the Commissioners. The arrangement took effect from 1st April, 1892, and provision has since been made in the Annual Estimates for payment of a sum, calculated at 5 per cent. upon the capitalised value of the buildings, to cover the cost of housing of the three colleges mentioned. The provision for this service in the current year's Estimate for Public Education is £3,580. The effect of the arrangement, paradoxical as it may seem, has been, however, to place the Undenominational college under the management of the Commissioners, in a position of marked inferiority in the matter of both buildings and equipment, as compared with the Denominational colleges. Repeated complaints have been made as to the unsuitable and insanitary conditions of the residence for students at the Undenominational college, and in order to provide a remedy for an admitted grievance it is proposed to make a grant of £50,000 for new buildings for their accommodation. Provision is also made in the same Estimate for an annual grant of £5,000 for additional scholars attending the Denominational colleges. The capitalised value of this sum is £142,855. Building expenditure in the case of the Marlborough Street Undenominational College has been met, since 1890, out of the accumulated savings on the Fixed Grants voted under Sub-head C. of the Vote for Public Education. These grants are of the nature of capitation grants made to all training colleges alike, and are not surrenderable to the Exchequer.

Land Purchase in County Clare.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say why the sittings of the Sub-Land Commission for Ennis and Ennistymon for March have been delayed; and whether, in view of the inconvenience caused by these delays, he will see that they do not take place again.

Mr. WYNDHAM: A number of Assistant Commissioners having been transferred to the work of land purchase, it was necessary to postpone the sitting, originally arranged for the 9th instant, to the 11th May.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I hope the right hon. Gentleman will point out the great inconvenience caused by this long delay.

Preferential Railway Rates.

Mr. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the statement made at the meeting of the Dublin Port and Docks Board, that serious injury was being done to the Port of Dublin by the action of the Great Southern and Western Railway in giving preferential rates for goods sent to England via the Milford route; whether, in view of the promises made to Parliament when amalgamation with the Great Western Railway of England was sanctioned with the Great Southern and Western Railway of Ireland, he will take such steps as will secure for traders a uniform rate over all routes by which goods or live stock may be despatched in Ireland to England, and *vice versâ*.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The matter appears to have been referred to a special Committee of the Port and Docks Board for consideration. The Great Southern and Western and Waterford and Limerick Railway Companies Amalgamation Act of 1900, contains special provisions for the protection of the Port of Dublin, in which it is provided that any disputes arising under these provisions shall be determined by an arbitrator appointed by the Board of Trade on application, as therein prescribed.

Mr. NANNETTI: Are the railways carrying out their agreement made at the time of the amalgamation to give equal facilities to all parts of Ireland? Will the right hon. Gentleman see that that promise is carried out?

Mr. WYNDHAM: Under the Act, the company undertook to do certain things, and in the event of failure the matter has to be referred to an arbitrator.

Labourers' Cottages in Ireland.

Mr. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received from the Millstreet Rural District Council a resolution drawing attention to the hardship inflicted on the ratepayers of the rural district in being taxed up to nearly the limit of one shilling in the pound on account of improvement schemes under the Labourers Acts, and requesting that clauses should be inserted in the proposed new Labourers Bill by which local taxation would be relieved of some of this burden; and, if so, does he intend to give effect to the terms of this resolution.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member appears to have overlooked the fact that an annual grant of public money amounting to £40,000 has been made available for some years, and will continue to be available, towards the cost of providing labourers' cottages in Ireland. The Labourers Bill now before the House contains provisions in respect of the distribution of this grant on a new basis.

Irish Trade Statistics.

Mr. LOUGH: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer at what date and by what authority the Customs ceased to collect statistics of the exports and imports between Ireland and Great Britain; and whether, seeing that the chief import from Ireland consists of great articles of food which have to compete with similar imports from foreign countries and the Colonies, will he consider the desirability of enabling Ireland to furnish herself with the same information as to the value of her export products as is available for the other parts of the Empire and all civilised countries.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The answer to the first part of the hon. Member's Question, is that the trade between Great Britain and Ireland was declared to be a coasting trade by Treasury Warrant of the 4th November, 1823, issued under the authority contained in Section 6 of the Act 4, Geo. IV., cap. 72, which assimilated the Customs tariffs of the two countries. As to the second part, I may repeat what I said in answer to a similar Question from the hon. Member—that no machinery exists for collecting complete statistics of goods removed from port to port within the United Kingdom; and any attempt to set up machinery for the purpose of these records would, I think, subject the shipping trade to restrictions quite out of proportion to the advantage that might result from them.

Cork Postal Staff.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will state how long the revision of the Cork indoor postal staff is overdue; and whether, seeing that the despatch of the parcel office night mail depends now on the same number of clerks as it did fifteen years ago, though the number of parcels dealt with has increased six-fold, and the number of separate despatches two-fold, he will consider the desirability of providing the extra assistance which has been represented as necessary in this department.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The Revision of the Cork indoor staff has now been sanctioned, and will be carried out without delay.

Roscrea Post Office.

Mr. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the house in the Square, Roscrea, county Tipperary, owned by Mr. W. J. Menton, and from which Mr. T. M. Ryan was evicted in July 1902, has been taken over by the postal authorities; and, if so, for what term and on what conditions; how much does the Department intend expending on the premises; is it proposed to transfer the post office from its present situation; what are the reasons for so doing; have the wishes of the towspeople been consulted; and for what length of time have the existing postal premises been used for such purpose.

Lord STANLEY: Some inquiry is necessary before I can answer the hon. Member. I will communicate to him, as soon as possible, the information for which he asks.

Church Discipline.

Mr. DAVID MACIVER (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the continuance of illegal practices in the Church of England, His Majesty's Government, having regard to the pledge given five years ago, will, in the present session of Parliament, introduce legislation for the better enforcement of discipline in the Church of England; or, failing such intention, will give facilities for the progress of the Church Discipline Bill introduced by the hon. Member for the Everton Division of Liverpool.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): I would remind my hon. friend that I was prepared to give a Parliamentary day to deal with the two Bills which came before the House last session in connection with this subject. That suggestion was, I think, perhaps acceptable to the House in general, but not to some of those who were responsible for one of the measures then before us. I think, however, that a great deal of light would be thrown upon this subject by the Report of the Royal Commission which I announced a few days ago, and I hope my hon. friend will wait till he sees that Report before pressing for any further action on the part of the Government.

Mr. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, E. Toxteth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will state what will be the precise terms of reference to the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Disorders; and whether he has any communication to make to the House as to the composition of the said Commission.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope to be able in a very short time to give my hon. friend the information he desires, but I cannot do so at the present moment.

Mr. AUSTIN TAYLOR: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of placing on this Commission a strong judicial element, as apart from any elements which may be either clerical or partisan, or both?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The point raised by my hon. friend has not escaped me, and the matter will be carefully considered from that point of view.

Government Licensing Bill.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the widespread interest in the matter, he can now say when the Licensing Bill will be introduced, or whether this will, or will not, be before Easter.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: As I stated in answer to a Question a few days ago,† I am not yet in a position to give any information on this subject.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether it will be before Easter, which is rapidly approaching?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir, I cannot.

Legal Terminology.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, although the King has been advised not to disallow the Labour Importation Ordinance of the Transvaal Legislature, the act of the Governor in giving the Royal Assent to that Ordinance is not final and conclusive; and whether it is competent for the King in Council within two years after the transmission of a copy thereof from the Governor to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to disallow the said Ordinance.

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† See page 591.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I would not venture to give any pronouncement upon the constitutional question which the hon. Gentleman has raised, but there is no precedent for the Crown, having announced that it does not raise any objection to an Ordinance, reversing that decision, nor do I believe that His Majesty would ever be advised to sanction such a reversal.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the expression "not to disallow" is a technical expression frequently used in reference to a modified consent of the Crown to Colonial Acts, and that it means the Crown retains the power to veto the Act at any time within two years.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not agree with that.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Could not the Government follow the course adopted in Jamaica recently and obtain a majority by putting additional nominated members on the Council?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the Question.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: What is the difference between the technical expressions "not disallowed" and "sanctioned?"

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: On all questions of legal terminology I feel I am perhaps the worst authority in the House. If the hon. Member will address his Question to the law officers he will get a satisfactory answer.

The Cabinet Memorandum.

Mr. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, on the last day of the last session, he placed before the Cabinet a document containing proposals that he wished officially to put forward in the name of the Government, which included preferential tariffs and taxation of food.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already given the House all the information which I think necessary.

Mr. LAMBERT: Considering that this matter has been referred to in the country and in both Houses of Parliament, and has been the cause, or the indirect cause, of the resignation of one or more Cabinet Ministers, are we not entitled to a complete statement of the facts?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The right hon. Gentleman declines to give any further information.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Did the right hon. Gentleman get the letter I addressed to him?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes.

Scottish Education Bill.

Mr. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the Scotch Education Bill will be introduced; and whether he will allow sufficient time between the First and Second Readings to admit of the Bill being fully considered in the country.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope the Bill will be introduced with very little delay, but I cannot give the hon. Member the precise date at present.

Mr. CROMBIE: Will it be before Easter?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope so.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—EASTER HOLIDAYS.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I beg to ask what will be the forthcoming business of the House, and whether the right hon. Gentleman can give any indication in regard to the coming and passing of the Easter Holidays.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It was a cheering element in the right hon. Gentleman's Question which gave an indication that there are holidays to come, but I am afraid I cannot give him any dates. I find that before the holidays begin I am always pressed to make them long, and that after they are over I am always abused unless I have made them short.

As to business, to-morrow I propose to take the Reports of the Army and Navy Votes, on Monday the Report of the Supplementary Estimates, and as soon as those are concluded we shall, of course, proceed with the stages of the Consolidated Fund Bill.

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Third Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

NEW BILL.

COLLEGIATE CHARGES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To confer additional powers on the Court of Teinds in Scotland, with reference to Collegiate Charges," presented by Mr. James A. Campbell; supported by Sir James Fergusson, Mr. John E. Gordon, Mr. Maxwell, Sir Mark Stewart, and Sir Walter Thorburn; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 103.]

SUPPLY [14TH MARCH.]

Resolution reported.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1904-5. VOTE ON ACCOUNT.

"That a sum, not exceeding £21,500,000, be granted to His Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charges for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905, viz.:—

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS IV.

	£
Board of Education . . .	7,000,000

CLASS I.

	£
Royal Palaces and Marlborough House . . .	26,000
Osborne	10,000
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens	35,000
Houses of Parliament Buildings	16,000
Miscellaneous Legal Buildings, Great Britain . . .	30,000
Art and Science Buildings, Great Britain . . .	15,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings . . .	20,000
Revenue Buildings . .	160,000
Public Buildings, Great Britain	160,000
Surveys of the United Kingdom . . .	90,000
Harbours under the Board of Trade	10,000
Peterhead Harbour . .	10,000
Rates on Government Property	260,000
Public Works and Buildings, Ireland	110,000
Railways, Ireland . . .	60,000

CLASS II.

United Kingdom and England:—

	£
House of Lords Offices . .	6,000
House of Commons Offices .	12,000
Treasury and Subordinate Departments . . .	40,000
Home Office	60,000
Foreign Office . . .	30,000
Colonial Office . . .	25,000
Privy Council Office, etc. .	4,000
Board of Trade . . .	75,000
Mercantile Marine Services .	30,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade .	3
Board of Agriculture . .	65,000
Charity Commission . .	15,000
Civil Service Commission .	18,000
Exchequer and Audit Department	25,000
Friendly Societies Registry .	3,000
Local Government Board .	85,000
Lunacy Commission . .	5,000
Mint (including Coinage) .	5
National Debt Office . .	6,000
Public Record Office . .	10,000
Public Works Loan Commission	5
Registrar General's Office .	18,000
Stationery and Printing .	340,000
Woods, Forests, etc., Office of	8,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of . . .	30,000
Secret Service . . .	40,000

Scotland :—

	£
Secretary for Scotland	25,000
Fishery Board	8,000
Lunacy Commission	3,000
Registrar General's Office	2,000
Local Government Board	5,000

Ireland :—

Lord-Lieutenant's Household	2,000
Chief Secretary for Ireland	12,000
Department of Agriculture	80,000
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	1,000
Local Government Board	25,000
Public Record Office	2,000
Public Works Office	18,000
Registrar General's Office	6,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey	7,000

CLASS III.

United Kingdom and England :—

	£
Law Charges	45,000
Miscellaneous Legal Expenses	28,000
Supreme Court of Judicature	140,000
Land Registry	18,000
County Courts	4,000
Police, England and Wales	17,000
Prisons, England and the Colonies	360,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	140,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum	14,000

Scotland :—

Law Charges and Courts of Law	30,000
Register House, Edinburgh	15,000
Crofters Commission, Scotland	2,000
Prisons, Scotland	38,000

Ireland :—

	£
Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions	32,000
Supreme Court of Judicature, and other Legal Departments	43,000
Land Commission	55,000
County Court Officers, etc.	45,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police	60,000
Royal Irish Constabulary	600,000
Prisons, Ireland	50,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools	55,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum	3,000

CLASS IV.

United Kingdom and England :—

	£
British Museum	80,000
National Gallery	10,000
National Portrait Gallery	3,000
Wallace Collection	3,000
Scientific Investigation, etc. United Kingdom	22,000
Universities and Colleges, Great Britain, and Intermediate Education, Wales	48,000

Scotland :—

Public Education	750,000
National Gallery	5,000

Ireland :—

Public Education	760,000
Endowed Schools Commissioners	400
National Gallery	2,500
Queen's Colleges	2,500

CLASS V.

Diplomatic and Consular Services	250,000
Uganda and East Africa Protectorates, and Uganda Railway	300,000
Colonial Services	340,000
Telegraph Subsidies and Pacific Cable	35,000

CLASS VI.

Superannuation and Retired Allowances	300,000
Merchant Seamen's Fund, Pensions, etc.	2,000
Miscellaneous, Charitable and other Allowances	1,000
Hospitals and Charities, Ireland	17,000

CLASS VII.

Temporary Commissions	25,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	17,587
Repayments to the Local Loans Fund	—
St. Louis Exhibition, 1904	60,000
Ireland Development Grant	184,000
Total for Civil Services.	£14,170,000

Revenue Departments.

	£
Customs	350,000
Inland Revenue	830,000
Post Office	3,800,000
Post Office Packet Service	250,000
Post Office Telegraphs	2,100,000
Total for Revenue Departments	£7,330,000
Grand Total	£21,500,000·"

Resolution read a second time.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) moved to reduce the Vote by £100 in respect of the Ireland Development Grant in order to protest against the non-appropriation of this grant to the purposes of primary education. In the first place, he said, he wished to call attention to the fact that this Estimate stood on an entirely different footing from any other Estimate. In the year 1902, when the English Education Act was passed, a sum of £1,400,000 was appropriated for primary education in this country, and Ireland then became entitled to an equivalent sum, but former precedents dealing with equivalent grants were put entirely on one side. First of all equivalent grants in the past had been calculated upon a certain basis laid down several years ago, giving a proportion of eighty to England, eleven to Scotland, and nine to Ireland. The Irish Members protested against this appropriation as unjust, and in the case of equivalent grants in respect of the Education Act of 1902 that proportion was for the first time put upon one side, and Ireland's equivalent was calculated on the basis of population. It was thus ascertained to be £185,000 a year. Under former precedents for equivalent grants that would have been available for primary education in Ireland, but, by the Development Grant of last year, it was provided that this money could be expended upon other subjects than the particular subject for which it was an equivalent grant. It was also provided, however, that Ireland should not, in any case, lose a single farthing of this money, because any portion of it not voted in one year would be carried on to the next year, and that the unexpended balances of £185,000 a year should accumulate for the benefit of Ireland. These changes, in their opinion, were most useful and valuable. The Estimates they were considering therefore stood in a peculiar position. As a matter of fact, it did not propose the voting of any new money at all; it dealt, so far as this discussion was concerned, with the allocation of money which had already been put by Statute at the disposal of Ireland. It would be noticed that from the unexpended balance from this grant of last year, and the sum of £185,000 this year, they had now at their disposal a sum of £233,000 odd. On this sum the first charge was a statutory one of £75,000, placed upon it by the Land Act of last year, viz.: £20,000 for the Congested Districts Board, £5,000 for Trinity College, and £50,000 in respect of loss attendant upon the working of the Act. Of course, it was profitless at this stage to make any criticism at all on this charge being placed upon the Development Grant, though there was one very grave matter connected with it to which he desired to direct attention. They agreed last year that a sum of £50,000 a year, for four years, should be charged upon this Development Grant, on the clear understanding that this sum was to meet the expenses connected with the flotation of the loans for the purpose of land purchase. Those expenses were clearly explained by the Chief Secretary, in his speech on 25th March last year, in introducing the Land Bill. He said they arose from three causes, viz.: (1) discrepancy between the dates of the quarterly dividends on stocks and the dates of half-yearly instalments of repayment; (2) the loss that might be due to flotation in temporary excess of the amount underwritten in Ireland; and (3) the loss accruing through issuing stock below par.

These losses were all agreed to last year, and he was not going to go back upon that bargain in the slightest degree, but they were told by the Chancellor of the Exchequer about a week ago that the last of the three classes of losses, the most serious of all, was not to be met by this £50,000 a year for four years, but was to be an additional charge upon the Development Grant.

He said deliberately that this was not understood by them when they agreed to put £50,000 a year for four years upon the Development Grant. They all understood that this sum was to meet all the losses consequent upon the flotation of stock. He wished to point out what a serious matter this was. In the present state of the money market it was calculated that it would cost something like £26,000 for sixty-eight-and-a half years to provide interest and sinking fund on the additional stock which must be issued to enable purchase transactions to the extent of £5,000,000 to be paid for in this first year. If the money market remained as it was, next year there would be £26,000 more, and so on, year after year, until the whole of this Development Grant would absolutely disappear. Now what did he suggest? He suggested that the £50,000 a year for four years was ample at present, at any rate, to meet all possible losses. Out of this £50,000 for this year, let them take £26,000 to meet the discounts, and they would leave £24,000 for other losses. What were the other losses? Why, everyone knew that the other contingent losses that the Chief Secretary mentioned could not possibly eat up £24,000; and he did suggest and ask that the £50,000 voted for this year should be used, as far as it would go, to meet all the losses consequent upon the flotation of stock, and in this way £24,000 more of the Development Grant would be available this year for other purposes. He had a number of matters connected with the Estimates which he must briefly touch upon, and therefore he would leave this question of the £50,000, simply saying that he regarded it as a very great grievance indeed that the Treasury, in addition to taking this £50,000 a year to meet the losses in flotation should come down and say they wanted £26,000 more to meet the discounts consequent on the state of the money market.

Turning to the Estimates themselves, he found that in these statutory charges, amounting to £75,000, the first item was £1,000 for Bann drainage. He confessed that when he saw this first it occurred to him that it was a very poor joke at the expense of their friends opposite. If their good will were to be purchased at so small a price as this he fancied it could not be considered of very much value. He had the greatest possible sympathy with the case of the Bann drainage, and he would be delighted to see large drainage works set on foot; but this £1,000 was put in in this way. It was suggested by the Government that it would take £100,000 to carry out this work, and they were willing that £50,000 should be provided out of this fund, if the locality would provide £50,000 more. He did not know whether this were a likely contingency or not, but by way of an earnest of good will they put in this £,1000 this year. What he had to say about this Bann drainage applied to other items in the Estimates, and he wished to say at once that until something effective was done to remedy the glaring and disgraceful defects in primary education in Ireland, he should object to schemes of this kind being undertaken by this fund. The Bann drainage was a deserving object, the continuation of the present state of things there was a disgrace to the Government. If they had had a Government of their own in the last 100 years, no matter how poor and how small their resources might have been, everyone knew, and no one better than the right hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite, that matters of this kind would not have been left as they were. Therefore, he was in complete sympathy with the Bann drainage, but he said that the money required for that ought to come from the Treasury, and should not be filched away from this little fund which was the equivalent for the Education Grant in England, and one half of which had already been collared by the Treasury for land purchase. He could not conceive, unless it was upon the ridiculous supposition that it would conciliate hon. Gentlemen opposite, why the Bann drainage was selected to be put in this Estimate. There were other drainage works in Ireland just as needful—the Barrow, the Suck, and the Shannon, and he did not know how many other cases equally meritorious. He rather fancied that the right hon. Gentleman opposite would support a scheme for the Barrow drainage, or the Suck drainage, just as much as he would support it for the Bann. Was the Bann put here for the purpose of trying to conciliate hon. Gentlemen with £1,000 and a vague promise in the future? He passed from the Bann drainage.

The next thing was a grant of £10,000 for the building fund of Marlborough Street Training College. Those Gentlemen who were Members for Irish constituences would have read, he had no doubt, a letter that appeared in the Irish newspapers yesterday or the day before from the Catholic Bishop of Limerick on this question of training colleges in Ireland. He desired to refer to that letter because, in his opinion, it made out a conclusive case for his view. The way the matter stood about the training colleges in Ireland was this. In 1890 there were four training colleges in the country. One of them was the undenominational college in Marlborough Street, Dublin, which had been built and equipped by the Government. In addition to that there were three denominational colleges, not all Catholic, which had been built by private funds, towards the support of which the Government were contributing nothing at all so far as building or upkeep were concerned. That was a state of inequality which caused a great deal of dissatisfaction in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the present Prime Minister, in 1890, applied himself to this question, he admitted the inequality, and made a declaration that, in his opinion, all these training colleges ought to be put on an equality, and ought to have what he called a free home. The result was what the Chief Secretary mentioned in answer to the Question of his hon. friend the Member for Kerry just now. The result was that the three denominational training colleges were put on a footing of equality with the undenominational one by the Board of National Education being obliged to give them every year a sum to cover the interest and sinking fund upon their building loan. A state of equality in that respect was established in these training colleges. The decision of 1890 was carried out, as they were told, fully in 1892. But the need for training colleges naturally and properly increased, and what happened? The Board of National Education, with the approval and sanction of the Treasury, agreed to sanction the building of three additional training colleges in the country. These training colleges, therefore, were not started by private individuals on their own responsibility. They were started with the sanction of the Board of National Education and the approval of the Treasury. They were built in Waterford, Limerick, and Belfast at enormous expense. He was very familiar with one of them, the De La Salle College in the city of Waterford, and he did not suppose that in any part of the three Kingdoms there was a more magnificent pile of buildings, or a better equipped college than that built by the brethren of that community. After these colleges had been built, naturally they made a claim that something should be contributed towards the building fund in their case as in the case of others. How were they met? They were told "this was settled once and for all by the decision of 1890." It was stated by successive Chancellors of the Exchequer, in answer to himself, who raised the subject year after year, that the question was settled in 1890 that building grants were only to go to the colleges then in existence, and that no further building grant whatever was to be made. He could quote declarations of successive Ministers to that effect; and yet they had here a proposal to put upon the Development Grant the sum of £50,000, the first instalment being £10,000, for the building of one of these colleges—the Marlborough Street Undenominational College. He submitted, therefore, that the question which was said to have been settled and decided in 1890 had been reopened. The decision to give no more building grants had been broken, and surely, if that were so, they were entitled to come and make a claim that some assistance should be given for these three additional denominational colleges. The sum that was necessary was comparatively small in view of other expenditure. A sum of about £4,000 a year would provide, he thought, for interest and sinking fund on the buildings of these colleges. He did think that, for the sake of that comparatively small sum, it was wrong to keep alive in Ireland this rankling feeling of injustice and inequality. He knew that he would have no case whatever if these colleges had been built without the authority and sanction and approval of the education authority and the Treasury, and if he were not justified in saying that these colleges were necessary, and that they were doing most admirable work.

The other proposal with reference to training colleges which appeared on this Estimate was a sum of £5,000 for the three colleges he had been speaking of, but it was not in respect of building expenses. It was to enlarge their certificate so as to enable them to take in more King's scholars, and fill up the space at their disposal. That was a matter that he had repeatedly brought under the attention of successive Ministers also, and he was exceedingly glad that the claim at last was being met, but it was being met in an exceedingly shabby and mean way. This charge ought not to be on the Development Grant at all. It ought to be on the ordinary Estimates. It ought to be an increase of the Estimates for King's scholars. Why was it not put there? Why was everything that the Government felt it their duty to do in Ireland to be thrown on this little Development Fund Grant, whose primary object was to provide schools for poor children in Ireland? While he was glad that the certificate of these colleges was to be enlarged so that they could receive more scholars, he thought it was an exceedingly shabby and mean thing to insist on the small cost being thrown on that small fund, instead of being cast on the ordinary Estimates for that purpose.

Let him take the next item—the Tralee and Dingle Railway, amounting to £20,000. He must repeat here what he said with reference to the drainage question. He objected upon principle to putting charges of this kind upon this fund when they were not spending a single farthing on the primary schools of Ireland for which this money was primarily voted. Apart altogether from the merits of this particular scheme, he objected to the allocation of this money. He would deal with the merits in a moment. Let him say in passing that he knew of several railway schemes, all of the most valuable character, which really ought to be undertaken and carried through in Ireland. There was the Keady and Armagh Railway which, if carried out, would, in his opinion, confer upon that part of Ireland at any rate a very great boon. He certainly thought that the Government ought to provide money for schemes of that kind, but whether the merits of the scheme were good, as in that case, or bad, as in one sense, at any rate he should show they were in the particular case chosen, he equally objected to their being thrown on this fund so long as the interests of national education were absolutely neglected and thrown on one side. Let him deal with the Tralee and Dingle Railway. He knew that there had been a grievance in this connection endured by certain persons in county Kerry. They had had a serious burden on them for this railway, which was almost derelict or of little value, and he had been in complete sympathy with his hon. friends the Members for Kerry in the efforts they had made to get this railway into the hands of some people who would be likely to work it at a profit, and in that way relieve the people of Kerry from the burden thrown on them. He repeated the expression of his sympathy again to-day. But the scheme of the Government, put forward now, was a scheme which, in its essentials, was bad and dishonest, because, if he understood it aright, it was not a scheme for benefiting and relieving the ratepayers of Kerry so much as it was a scheme for benefiting and relieving the Great Southern and Western Railway Company. The scheme was, as he understood it, that the Great Southern and Western Railway Company were to be asked to buy this almost derelict railway. He heard a description of it the other day by a high authority who told him that in a strong wind the railway carriages were liable to be blown off the line. He hoped he was not libelling county Kerry. He was told that the railway was in a very bad condition. The proof of this was that the first part of the scheme was that if the Great Southern and Western Railway Company bought the railway, they were to receive from the Development Grant £20,000, or as much more as might be necessary, for the repair of the line; secondly, that the county council was to raise certain loans from the Board of Works; and thirdly—and this now was the real secret of the whole transaction—that the Great Southern and Western Railway Company were to perpetrate what he did not hesitate to call a swindle of public money and a gross violation of faith to this House in connection with the Rosslare and Fishguard line—a swindle which in 1901 they attempted to palm off in this House and which they succeeded in temporarily palming off on the Treasury, because the Secretary for the Treasury, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, told them he had agreed to the arrangement, and they succeeded in palming it off on the Chief Secretary, because the Financial Secretary told them that the Irish Office also approved of it. These were the conditions under which the Great Southern and Western Railway was willing to buy the Tralee and Dingle line, and from the fact that £20,000 was put upon this Estimate on the responsibility of the Government, he supposed he was justified in coming to the conclusion that the Government had agreed. What sort of a Government had they in Ireland?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): I have an open mind.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said he could understand having an open mind, but what was the meaning of having an open mind and still putting £20,000 upon the Estimates? If the right hon. Gentleman had not agreed, what did he want the money for? The thing was absurd and ridiculous; the fact that they were making a proposal of £20,000 for this purpose was a clear indication that if a final decision had not been come to the Government had gone a long way to agreeing to the arrangement. By the Rosslare and Fishguard Railway Bill, passed after investigation by a Hybrid Committee of which he himself was a member, the Great Southern and Western Railway were bound by Act of Parliament to construct a line between Fermoy and Cork and also connect the South-west of Ireland by a bridge over the Lee. On these two conditions the Treasury and the Committee of the House of Commons agreed that the Great Southern and Western Railway should be given a sum of £93,000 which was due to the Treasury on a mortgage of one small line they had bought as part of the amalgamation. They failed to fulfil these conditions, and the Treasury, very properly, called up the money and it had to be paid. Then in 1901 they had the audacity to go to the Treasury and ask to have the money paid back to them if they built the bridge over the Lee at Cork, even though they abandoned the second condition; and they made the utterly dishonest pretext that these conditions were alternative. They were not alternative conditions. The money was to be paid only if both conditions were fulfilled. They, however, actually induced the Treasury and the Irish Government to agree to give them the money if they fulfilled this one condition, and it was not until the Irish Members raised the question by a very vigorous protest that the present Prime Minister, by listening impartially to the facts, said that this country would not be guilty of a violation of faith and that the agreement with the Treasury should not be completed. But hope sprang eternal in the breasts of railway directors. Apparently these gentlemen were quite determined to get their hands on the £93,000, and now under the pretext of the announcement of this ancient proposal of buying the Tralee and Dingle Railway, they were making another effort to carry out the same arrangement attempted in 1901, and defeated by this House. He was greatly surprised that the Chief Secretary had had anything whatever to do with the transaction. The right hon. Gentleman must know that the railway company made it a condition that the purchase of this line should be regarded as part of the Rosslare and Fishguard scheme, and that they should be allowed to give up the Fermoy and Cork line. He was surprised that the right hon. Gentleman had had anything to do with this attempt to collar this money now. This £93,000 was originally given by the Treasury for the development of that part of Ireland where it was spent, and as far as it rested with him, at any rate, it would certainly not be allowed to be collared by this railway company and diverted from the purpose for which it was voted. There were many railway schemes, including the Dingle and Tralee one, which he would be glad to see carried out; but even if this scheme were in every sense a good and practicable one, he would protest against this charge being put upon the Development Grant, when it ought, in the ordinary course of events, to come from the Treasury on the Estimates.

He came now to his chief complaint against the Estimate; and it was that out of this money, an equivalent grant for an education grant in England, not one single farthing—unless they included what was going to be spent upon training colleges—was going to be spent on primary education in Ireland. It was quite true they agreed that this fund should be treated in a different way from equivalent grants in the past. They agreed on both sides of the House that some of the money might be spent upon other matters than education; but already more than half of it had been taken for land purchase, and certainly no one who agreed to that arrangement ever thought for one moment that none of the money, not a farthing, was to be spent on primary education. He thought that amongst Irish Members there would be probably absolute unanimity that the proposal to spend money on land purchase, Bann drainage, and God knew what, and yet not a farthing upon primary education, was not a proposal which should be accepted in any quarter of the House. Last year what really amounted to a promise was made by the Government, that one particular expenditure in connection with the national schools should be made. He did not know whether English Members were aware of the fact—it was familiar to Irish Members, of course—that in Ireland they could not get a second teacher in a school unless there was an average attendance of over sixty. In England he thought it was certainly not more than fifty. Mr. Dale, the Government inspector, who had just issued his report on the schools of Ireland, offered the opinion that the limit ought to be from forty to fifty; and Mr. Starkey, the Resident Commissioner of Education in Ireland, put the limit down as low as thirty-five. It must stand to reason that a school with an average of sixty pupils, which meant an attendance very often of between eighty and ninety, could not be taught by a single man. Well, managers and teachers and people in Ireland put forward a very moderate demand that the limit should be reduced from sixty to fifty. His own opinion was that the limit of fifty was too high, but this was the demand put forward, and as to it there was complete unanimity among all classes interested in education in Ireland. It would require an expenditure of £24,000 a year. Was it not a monstrous thing that when Parliament gave £185,000 a year to Ireland for education as an equivalent grant of £1,400,000 given in England for the same purpose, that the whole money should be spent upon discounts, land purchase, commission to brokers, drainage, dishonest railway schemes, and so forth, and that this modest sum of £24,000 required for this purpose should be refused? The right hon. Gentleman, as he had said, last year made what amounted to a practical promise that this should be done; and he wanted to know why it had been violated in this way? The right hon. Gentleman might say that there was a difficulty with the Treasury; but, after all, from the Treasury point of view they did not care on what the money was to be spent. No doubt the Treasury would like this money to be accumulated as a happy hunting ground on which they could make raids from time to time. They did not care whether it was spent in providing the necessary teachers in the schools of Ireland or for any other purpose. He wanted to know why the promise of the Government had been violated in this way? He made a strong plea that a considerable portion of this money should be spent upon the necessary repairs, equipment, and heating of the schools in Ireland. They all listened to the debate the other night on the Education Act, and no one could help being moved by the picture drawn by the Prime Minister of the sufferings that would be inflicted on Welsh schools in certain contingencies. The right hon. Gentleman said that if they would not put the Act into operation the children would suffer; they would not be able to get books, the schools would not be put into a state of repair, and that there would be a shortage of fuel to keep the children warm. Why! this was a chronic state of things in a large number of the schools all through the poorer parts of Ireland.

He would read to the House a few words from the report of Mr. Dale. He said that as a result of his investigation he had no hesitation in reporting that, both in point of convenience for teaching and the requirements necessary for the health of the teachers and community the average school building in Dublin and Belfast was markedly inferior to the average school in English cities of equal size. Then, comparing the worst of the two countries as well as the best, he was forced to the conclusion that it was difficult to give in words any adequate conception of the buildings; in point of unsuitability and unhealthiness they far exceeded any premises it had been his lot to visit in England. What did he say with reference to the country schools? He said they were generally dirty, small repairs were neglected, and the out offices were rarely clean and at times indescribably filthy; out of 100 schools he had inspected in England he had never seen any kept with such utter disregard of care and decency as in Ireland. This neglect, he said, prevented these primary schools accomplishing their main object in training children in habits of cleanliness and order. He himself might pause to say in this connection that there was no fund for repair, upkeep, and heating of these schools; it had to be done by the teacher out of his own miserable pittance. Mr. Dale further said that the complaint of inspectors as to the complete inadequacy of the heating of the schools was only too well founded. Fuel was provided in turn by the pupils with occasional help from the teacher, manager, or parents; and the supply was not often obtained sufficiently early in the morning, or it ran short at times when it was most needed. The inspector went on to point out that in the country as in the towns there existed schools which fell far short of the standard attained even by the worst schools in the rural districts of England or Scotland. Then take the question of equipment. The children in Irish schools had to purchase their own schools books. He had seen it suggested that this was a very good thing, because when the child went home he could spend his leisure in study. But when they considered the poverty of Ireland he thought it was nothing short of a scandal that little children had to provide their own books. With reference to equipment, he was speaking the other evening to the teacher of a school in an important district, who said that the maps in his school were over twenty years old and were falling to pieces and that he could not afford to buy new maps. The floor was broken, and he had no money to put new flooring down, so that he had actually himself to engage in laying down pieces of soap boxes and tea boxes and things of that sort here and there over the holes to prevent the little children from falling through. If the windows were broken there was no possibility of getting money to mend them. Mr. Dale reported that the cost of maps fell upon the teachers, and that apart from the supply of absolute necessaries of reading, writing, and geography, the equipment of the ordinary national school was most meagre and that the average school was really below the poorest of voluntary schools in this country. He reported that there was no proper provision for equipment, and wound up by saying that the deficiencies commented upon were due in most of the districts to want of funds. That report was only issued a few days ago; it was made by a special inspector sent over to examine the country schools. In the face of that report was it not something little short of criminal that this money was to be squandered? He would substitute for the word "squandered" the word "spent" upon schemes of railway development and so on. Railway extension and facilities of transit no doubt were necessary to the future of Ireland, but over and above all things the greatest necessity was the provision of clean, healthy, and decent schools for the young children of Ireland.

Mr. John Redmond.

This report, from beginning to end, was a wholesale condemnation of the present system of primary education in Ireland. Possibly that would be the answer he would get. Possibly the Government would say, "Yes, the system is so bad that it must be revolutionised." That was his own view. but the Government would doubtless add, "Therefore we must not spend any of this money at present on education and we must give it to railways and so on." He had two objections to that argument. If the money was not spent on education it would either go to schemes, many of which would be faulty, or else it would probably be collared by the Treasury. The most powerful answer to that argument was this—when would this necessary reform of primary education be carried out? For thirty, years the Irish Party had been claiming in that House that the system was rotten and bad and should go; for thirty years Irish public opinion had held that view. Archbishop Walsh did his best. He went on to the Board of National Education and endeavoured to effect some reform. His attempt failed, and he left the Board in disgust. Public opinion was now unanimous against the present system of primary education, yet they were not to spend money on giving fair play to little children or on maps and books or on providing decent floors and clean out-offices for the schools—they were not to do that until some English Government had the time or the inclination to introduce a new scheme and revolutionise primary education in Ireland. Yes, they had similar treatment over the University question. The right hon. Gentleman's answer on that subject was that he ought not to introduce a Bill to give them a University until there was practical unanimity on the subject in Ireland, knowing, of course, that upon that question there would never be unanimity, and that nothing would therefore be done. That answer would be made on the present occasion. It would be mocking the poor children and their wants to say that money could not be spent for that purpose until they had come to a conclusion to radically reform the system. The right hon. Gentleman, in reply to a Question put by him and in several of his speeches last year, promised to consult Irish opinion as to the allocation of this fund. He did not know what the right hon. Gentlemen meant by consulting opinion in Ireland. He should like to know how many resolutions the right hon. Gentleman had read from public bodies in Ireland, from the North, East, South, and West, of all creeds and parties, demanding that some of the money should be spent at once upon these schools. The answer would be instructive, because the right hon. Gentleman must have received them by the hundred from every part of the country. Had he received a single resolution from any representative public body in Ireland saying that he should spend the money on other schemes to the exclusion of primary education. The right hon. Gentleman asked him for his opinion and he gave it, objecting to the Tralee Railway expenditure and urging him to put on £24,000 for the increase in the number of teachers. But the right hon. Gentleman had left the Tralee Railway expenditure on and the education money off. That was the way the right hon. Gentleman consulted public opinion in Ireland. Last year the original proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was that there was no need to consult anybody, because the fund was not to be on the Estimates at all, but was simply to be voted to the Irish Government. After discussion, however, it became necessary to bring the matter before Parliament, and now, even though the money was on the Estimates, it did not appear that Irish opinion would have any influence at all. By public speech in this House, by private representation, by the declaration of every public body in Ireland, one course had been pressed upon the right hon. Gentleman, and yet he had taken the exactly opposite course. In these cases consultation on these matters were useless and some, indeed, might be said to be humiliating.

Finally he asked the right hon. Gentleman to give them some general statement as to his views respecting the future of this fund. What did he intend to do with it? Did he intend to pay other sums into this fund? What was he going to do with the savings in the administration of Ireland? He had never told them what those savings amounted to. During the discussion on the Land Bill he said he would make a saving of £250,000 which would go towards meeting the charge on the bonus, although the charges on the bonus would not reach £250,000 for many years to come. What was he going to do with those savings? Was he going to put them into this fund? So far as the savings to the extent of £250,000 were concerned, he was pledged to provide that amount whenever it was necessary. That did not mean that because he promised £250,000 towards the bonus he would have to pay the £250,000 to-day. If so, he would have to provide for the bonus twice over before he was done with it.

MR. WYNDHAM: One of the elements in the arrangement was that the £250,000 of savings would accrue at an earlier date than the charges in respect to the bonuses, which would ultimately amount to £390,000.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said that was the case, but the £390,000 was the total amount of the chargeability to the bonus which, in the end, when it was all paid, would fall upon the Exchequer. But the right hon. Gentleman had already made about £250,000 savings.

MR. WYNDHAM: I undertook to institute economies in the case of the Irish Government which would reach £250,000. With the savings effected in the course of five years the charge for the bonus was to be set off. The accrued charge for the settlement of the bonus will ultimately amount to £390,000.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said his point was that if, as he believed, the right hon. Gentleman had made savings amounting to £250,000, and he commenced to pay the £250,000 now, in the long run he would have paid a great deal more than the charges on the whole bonus. The right hon. Gentleman was ambitious about these economies in his speeches on the Land Bill. He said that they would amount to a larger sum than £250,000, and spoke of £400,000 or £500,000. What was he going to do with the balance? Was the balance to go into the Treasury, like other balances that happened to accrue in Ireland which were collared by the Treasury? He wanted to know about the unexpended balances under the Labourers Acts. There was £50,000 in the hands of the counties now. Was the right hon. Gentleman going to rob the labourers of the counties? Was he going to make that sum a present to the Treasury? These were matters of vital importance to Ireland, and he had gone into them at some length and with some elaboration, because it was the first opportunity they had had of dealing with the Development Fund. He thought everyone interested in Ireland would see the vast importance of seeking some explanation as to the real position of the facts and as to what the policy of the Government really was. He ended, as he begun, by protesting with all the vehemence at his command against this money going to the Treasury on the one hand for the Land Act charges, and to railways and other objects on the other hand, while the poor little children of Ireland were being left poor, miserable, and neglected.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.) said he cordially agreed with all that had been said by his hon. and learned friend. He cordially agreed with the view expressed that the Irish Development Grant should not be mortgaged to the operation of the Irish Land Purchase Act, and also that the first charge on the Development Grant ought to be a charge in favour of primary education. This was the first time this Vote had ever come before the House, and that being so it was only right that opportunity should be taken for discussing it on the Estimate. The Estimate seemed to be drawn up in a very loose and haphazard way. If the proposals put before the House to-day were part of a general well-reasoned and well thought out scheme for the development of the country he would not have a word to say about them, but under the proposals submitted it appeared to him certain districts of the country had been selected for favoured treatment and other districts left out in the cold. With regard to the drainage of the Bann, no doubt the people living in that district deserved assistance from the Government just as much as the people of any other district, but why was this district selected especially and other parts of Ireland which required to be drained just as much left out? The people of Enniscorthy desired to have that place made a seaport and had as much right to have it done at the public expense as other people to have their district drained. With regard to the Tralee and Dingle Railway the same remark applied; he had no objection to them receiving the £20,000 which was put down, but he thought that amount ought to come from another source than the Development Grant. That railway had had its very fair share of attention, and he did not see why on the first occasion that this Vote was brought before the House, this railway should be selected for special treatment. If it were a question of putting £20,000 into this railway the money should come from the Irish Board of Works, for the reason that the railway was one of their creation and construction, and was handed over by them to the county of Kerry, with a guarantee that it was in a fit and proper condition for the objects for which it was destined, and the blame for the inefficiency of the railway was due to the Irish Board of Works alone. Hon. Members from Ireland would watch this question with a great deal of care, and would oppose every attempt on the part of the Government or the Great Southern and Western Railway to break the pledge given to the country when the amalgamation was entered into, which placed the whole of the railway system of Southern Ireland in the hands of that company. With regard to the £93,000 which the Great Southern and Western Company were allowed then to keep, that was for a line for the development of the county of Waterford and the surrounding districts, and hon. Members from Ireland would see that that intention was carried out. The toll bridge in the county of Waterford should be freed with part of that money. The ratepayers of these counties had an interest in the matter, and they would see to it that if it was proposed to divert this £93,000, it did not go into the coffers of the Great Western and Southern Railway.

He did not intend to go into the question of technical education on the present occasion; the views of Nationalist Members on the subject were well-known to the Government, but there was one point to which he desired to call attention. Some time ago the Chief Secretary proposed to give Ireland a sum of £7,000 for technical education, and a few nights ago the Financial Secretary to the Treasury promised to give £3,500. In the Vote under discussion there was an item of £3,500. Was that the money promised by the Financial Secretary or was it a portion of the amount promised by the Chief Secretary, or was it a separate sum altogether? In any case it would not affect his strong objection to this Development Grant being charged with any money for Irish technical instruction in view of the fact that money already due to Ireland had never yet been paid out of the Treasury or any explanation given in regard thereto. It had been recently stated that from 1890 to 1897 the average amount given to Ireland for technical instruction purposes was about £3,000. He objected to the statement at once, but the point had not been cleared up. According to the Returns of the Science and Art Department from 1890 to 1897 a total amount of £108,174 was voted for technical instruction in Ireland, whereas the amount spent was only £49,545. He was entitled to ask what had become of the difference of £58,629 between the amount voted and the amount spent. Was it still available for the purposes for which it was voted, and, if so, how soon would it be allocated to those specific purposes? A further point on which information was required was the effect of the Act of 1902 upon Ireland's claims under the Act of 1889. With regard to future transactions under the Development Grant, every Irish Member would naturally look at the matter from the point of view of the interests of his constituents, but there were probably some matters to which all would agree that some of the money should be devoted. Those matters of agreement could be found only by discussing the question in Parliament. With that object in view he would ask the Government to consider whether something could not be done to develop the fishing and boat-building industries outside the congested districts. It was always much easier to keep in existence established industries than to start new ones, and the industries to which he had referred stood in danger of extinction. Facilities were also required on the South and South-east Coast for the construction of piers and harbours. If Members were generally agreed, he would suggest that the Chief Secretary should consider whether a portion of the Development Grant might not be devoted to these purposes. He begged to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out '£21,500,000,' and insert '£21,499,900.'"—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

Question proposed, "That '£21,500,000' stand part of the Resolution."

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) said he had listened with great interest to the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, and agreed with almost all he had said. This Development Grant appeared to be very similar to the Church Surplus Fund, which had always been a sort of milch cow, from which anybody who wanted money for any purpose could easily obtain it. For seventeen or eighteen years he had done his best to induce successive Governments to take up the question of the Bann drainage. When the right hon. Gentleman took office, he believed—and he still held that belief—that they had a Chief Secretary who really desired to further the progress and prosperity of Ireland, but he would rather that that purpose was carried out at the expense of the Treasury than at the expense of the Development Grant. The Bann drainage presented a state of affairs which he did not believe could exist in any civilised country other than Ireland. It was not on all fours with other drainage questions in Ireland. He did not think there was any drainage area in the same position as that drained by the Bann which had suffered under so much absolute injustice. He would give a short history of the Bann drainage. In the year 1844, before he entered the House of Commons, the occupiers and owners in that area suffered from periodical flooding of the Bann, and they petitioned the Board of Works and lodged £1,000 for preliminary expenses, and the Board of Works consented to undertake the drainage. They sent down their engineer to get out a plan for the drainage of that area, and he did so, and after considerable time and a most elaborate examination of all the details, a scheme was produced. The Estimate was that it would take three years to carry out this plan and that it would cost £109,000. Upon those terms for drainage alone the owners and occupiers of the flooded lands consented to enter into the scheme, and what happened? The Board of Works in Ireland adopted their own method of carrying out this drainage scheme. Instead of engaging contractors bound to finish the work in a certain time they proceeded to do it themselves with their own engineers and surveyors, and engaged labour by the week, which was an extremely expensive method. The result was that it was nobody's interest that this work should be concluded at any stated time, and the House would scarcely believe that instead of three years it took twelve years to complete. [AN HON. MEMBER: That is Dublin Castle government.] At any rate that is the way it was done and it cost £162,000 instead of £109,000. Whose fault was that? Was it the fault of the owners or occupiers? They could not influence the Board of Works in carrying out their own system. To add to this misfortune the famine came which caused so much evil, and the Board of Works very rightly used those drainage works to give employment to the starving population. What they contended was that the extra expense involved in employing these labourers ought not to have fallen upon the occupiers but upon the Government who used those works to assist the distressed. All these extra expenses were piled up upon the unfortunate owners and occupiers. Time went by and other drainage was carried out all over the country, with the result that lands which were never flooded before in this area became flooded. These unfortunate tenants and occupiers near the Bann and Lough Neagh had paid in cash from the time those works were started £166,000. He thought that was a very large sum in order to prevent the inhabitants being drowned. He had heard of passive resisters in this country, but he thought this case showed how extremely patient the people of Ireland were. During the last fifty years these unfortunate people had gone on paying drainage rates, and they had seen, year after year, their farms under water and their houses invaded by the flood. If the Chief Secretary for Ireland had come down and visited the flooded districts and seen the houses with six inches and one foot of water in the kitchens and the bedrooms, he might have been influenced so much that he would have done something more generous than this "magnificent" proposal. No doubt his right hon. friend would say that he would do more but for that terrible person the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He would remind the Chief Secretary that yesterday the Treasury was enriched by £100, which was another injustice to Ireland, not inflicted this time by a Saxon, but by an Irishman. There was a very easy way of showing hospitality. If he wished to establish a reputation for hospitality, and he went out into the streets and met some poor man and said, "My friend, I will give you a dinner of the best kind if you will only pay half," he did not think that would be a very satisfactory dinner to a poor man, and yet that was the kind of proposal made by his right hon. friend to those tenants and occupiers who had been ruined and partially drowned. The men survived, but their crops did not survive, and they had been ruined by these floods. After all this injustice under which they had suffered and the tremendous burden which the Board of Works and their mistaken scheme had inflicted upon them, the right hon. Gentleman now proposed to give to these drowned-out tenantry £50,000 if they would find another £50,000. The Government were prepared to give £20,000 to the Great Southern and Western Railway, but they would give nothing to the North of Ireland without asking for a *quid pro quo.* [AN HON. MEMBER: They ask for a "quid" *pro* "quid."] Did his right hon. friend imagine for a single moment that a solution of this pressing problem would be attained by this proposal. Could anybody possibly conceive that these occupiers would consent to go on seeing their farms flooded year after year and paying drainage rates when they had already paid £166,000. Did the Chief Secretary imagine they would be content to pay £50,000 more in addition to what they had already paid? He called it a farce, and he hoped his right hon. friend would be able to give some satisfactory explanation and hold out some hope of a better proposal. They wanted a *bonâ fide* offer to the suffering population in the North of Ireland and not a delusion. He had no doubt hon. Gentlemen opposite would support him in this for they were all ready to support anything which was for the good of Irishmen. He hoped the Chief Secretary would in his reply enable him to go to the North of Ireland and say the Government did not really mean to make a joke of them. If he interpreted rightly the Estimate before the House, the people in the North of Ireland would say they had been treated with absolute levity.

Referring to the technical buildings attached to the Queen's College, Belfast, the hon. and gallant Member said that ten or eleven years ago £8,000 were voted by the House for the erection of these buildings. About £4,000 were spent in digging the foundations, and after the walls were partially built nothing more was done. There the walls stood staring at the people of Belfast. He did not know what happened to the remainder of the money. He should like to know why the process of erecting these buildings had been suspended. A private offer had been made of £10,000 for the purpose of equipping them if the Government would finish them. He saw no mention in the Estimates of a sum for this purpose, and he thought it would have been much better employment of the Development Grant if the Government had proceeded with the erection of these buildings instead of giving the money proposed to the Great Southern and Western Railways Company. A large sum, amounting to £108,000, was to be devoted to the erection of a College of Science in Dublin. He did not grudge that expenditure. The people of Ulster were always delighted to see money spent in Ireland. [AN HON. MEMBER: Our own money.] Partly Irish money, no doubt. While they were going to spend this money in Dublin, why did not the Government do something for Belfast, which, although not the capital of Ireland, was the capital of industrial Ireland, the largest city in Ireland, and the city which, to his mind, had redeemed the character of the Irish people.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Loud cheers from Sloan.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON: The Irish people had been accused broadcast of being incapable of taking their place beside the other great progressive nations of the world, and especially beside their great predominant partner. In Belfast they had shown they could do that. Why was it? He did not say that the intellects of Ulster men were keener or brighter than those of the Southerner. Certainly not. There was no brighter man, no man more capable of advancing along the line of progress and knowledge, than the Irish Celt in Ireland. But the difference arose through placing Irishmen under different conditions and in a different environment. In part of Ulster they had perfect freedom of thought, and therefore they had no bar to their progress. That was a condition of affairs not to be found in other parts of Ireland, and it would be the duty of the Nationalists, who said they loved Ireland, and he believed they did, to take away from their path whatever shadow rested upon it and which had hitherto prevented them, with all their natural ability and opportunities and living in a far more fertile portion of the country, from advancing as quickly and as far as the people in the North along the line of progress and prosperity.

Mr. EDWARD BARRY (Cork County, S.) said he wished to refer to the matter of the Tralee and Dingle Railway. He was the representative of a seaboard constituency in which there was a thriving fishing industry. The establishment of that industry was largely due to the generous and philanthropic aid of an English lady. Owing to the want of transit facilities from the South of Ireland to England, and the failure of the Great Southern and Western Railway Company to carry out their promise to erect a bridge over the river Lee, the fishing community were placed at a great disadvantage in the way of getting fresh fish conveyed to the market. If there was a bridge over the Lee transit would be greatly facilitated. At present the boxes had to be carted from the Bandon terminus to another station, and that wasted a great deal of time. In the South of Ireland in the last two years, and particularly in his own constituency, some experiments had been made in the growing of early potatoes, and this industry also was placed at a disadvantage for the same reasons. The experiments had so far been very satisfactory. While money might be expended to advantage in improving the transit facilities there and in other parts of Ireland, he sympathised too much with the condition of the primary schools to wish that this £20,000 should be practically given to the Great Southern and Western Railway Company. He urged that in the interest of the industries he had mentioned a bridge over the Lee should be provided in order that transit to the market might be facilitated. At the same time he was most anxious that this money should be devoted to improving the school accommodation and equipping the schools with proper apparatus. If they were to teach the young idea how to shoot they must provide a congenial atmosphere, and he hoped that some money would in future be spent in meeting the needs of the schools in the South of Ireland. It had always appeared to him that it must have a most demoralising effect not to provide sufficient accommodation for the children. He was not claiming that this £20,000 should be spent in building the bridge over the Lee, but he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would bear in mind that the directors of the Great Southern and Western Railway Company should carry out the obligation imposed upon them, and remove the grievance complained of in the South of Ireland.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said he hoped he might be permitted to intervene in the debate for a few moments in consequence of what had fallen from the hon. and learned Member for Waterford as to the cause of education in Ireland. He remembered the time when elementary education in Ireland was thought superior to that of England and that they in England might learn a lesson from Ireland. No doubt since those days very great progress had been made in England, and the schools here were now very much better; but corresponding progress had not been made in Ireland. He hoped, indeed, that it had not gone back. There were many things which, to his own knowledge, required improvement; and there was nothing more urgently required than a comprehensive scheme of Irish education. And when the Government brought in such a scheme it would be warmly supported from that side of the House for two reasons. First, because they had received very great support from the

Irish Party in passing the English Education Bill the session before last; and gratitude would induce them to cordially help the Irish Members to obtain a better system of education for Ireland. Second, because he regarded the education of the Irish people not as an Irish question at all; it was an Imperial question. It was the interest, therefore, of every Member of the United Kingdom to see that the Irish people were well educated, and that they should enjoy the same educational advantages as the people of England and Scotland. The system adopted in England and Scotland of entrusting the obligation of providing education for the children to the local authorities would, he hoped, be extended to Ireland. That would be a part of self-government in Ireland which everybody would be only too glad to bestow on the Irish people; and he hoped that the Government would soon introduce a measure of that kind.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.) said he was sure Irish Members on that side of the House had heard the announcement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University with great satisfaction. It was only right to say that that was not the first occasion in the right hon. Gentleman's Parliamentary career in which he had intervened in the discussions in this House in the interests of Ireland. He thought that Ireland might congratulate itself on the fact that the Development Grant had been ear-marked to the extent that this money was not to be wastefully spent for the purposes of corruption, instead of for purposes useful to the whole country. But the present mode of disposal of the money had this disadvantage, that English Members might come down to the House, year after year, and imagine that additional grants of new money were being made to Ireland, and might be horrified and shocked that these increased grants were being made to Ireland in the Estimates. He thought the right hon. Gentleman ought to take some means, either by an instruction or by some statement on the Estimates, to safeguard the Irish public and the English representatives in this House against misapprehension in this regard; that this was money not voted for the first time, that it was a grant made in 1903, and was being disposed of as years went by. The present Estimate was exceptional; there was no precedent for it. The right hon. Gentleman in speaking on the Estimates before the House, made some observations which he did not comprehend, as to his responsibility for the item of £20,000 for the Dingle and Tralee Railway.

MR. WYNDHAM said he would deal with that matter in his reply.

MR. CLANCY said there ought to be no doubt as to whether the right hon. Gentleman was responsible or not. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in England was the right hon. Gentleman's master on this question, and the right hon. Gentleman looked at it, not from the point of view of Ireland, but from that of the Imperial Exchequer. If that were the case the interests of Ireland were greatly in danger. In connection with this matter he wanted to know why it was that so much money should be saved up and carried forward when there were so many needs in Ireland. He was suspicious of every transaction in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer of England had to do with Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Armagh, in his speech, with which most Irish Members on that side of the House agreed, referred to the use which had been made of the Irish Church Surplus Fund. Perhaps few hon. Members of the House had a recollection of the real moral to be derived from the distribution of that fund. £30,000 a year was to come to Ireland from that fund, and there was the Maynooth Grant which was revised at the time of the disestablishment of the Irish Church. Now these two grants were actually charged on Irish funds and the Treasury was relieved to that amount. He confessed he thought it was quite possible that Ireland was going to be treated in a similar manner in regard to this grant. If not, why was £118,000 to be hung up this year? What was it for? His own opinion was that the Treasury had forced the right hon. Gentleman not to allocate that amount, in order that they might be able to lay hands on it for Government demands which ought properly to be provided by fresh Votes; and it was hoped that the process would, from the very fact that it went on from year to year, become so familiar that the House and even the Irish Members would not remark upon it, and that Ireland might be safely cheated. If he could help it, he certainly would not allow the matter to be forgotten. They all recognised that this money was for all Ireland, not only for the South West and East of Ireland, but for the North also; and he thought they ought to insist on a full allocation of this money every year. They ought to insist on an explanation from the right hon. Gentleman as to what he intended to do with the £118,000. Money had already been drawn out of the fund and paid to somebody. It was provided by the Act of last year that two-thirds of the Development Grant should only be paid for the financial year 1903–4; but it appeared from the Estimate that out of that two-thirds, £48,000 had been already appropriated. There was no explanation as to what had been done with it. Surely that was an omission which ought to be supplied before the debate closed.

Needless to say, when his hon. and learned friend the Member for Waterford spoke, he spoke for the whole Irish Party. It was his own personal opinion that the most universally urgent of all the demands from Ireland was the improvement of the primary schools. No one would deny that. The matter of drainage was of great importance. In fact, there were hundreds of objects on which every penny of this money might be usefully spent ten times over. But, after all, the matter on which there was the greatest agreement and the least objection was that a generous amount of this money should, for the next two or three years, be spent on the improvement of the primary schools; and he was glad to think that the opinion expressed by his hon. and learned friend the Member for Waterford was shared by every Irish Member in the House. If that were the opinion of the entire Irish representation, what moral right had the right hon. Gentleman to refuse that demand? What right had he, an Englishman, to dictate in a matter of this kind? The House of Commons had voted the money to Ireland; and the only question now was how it was to be distributed. The Irish Members of all shades of opinion had expressed the view that the money should be spent in a particular way, and what right had a stranger who governed the country against the will of four-fifths of its inhabitants to gainsay them? The right hon. Gentleman was not free from obligations on this matter. Last year he was asked if the question of primary education would receive consideration as well as other questions, and he replied in one emphatic word, "Certainly." [Mr. WYNDHAM: Hear, hear!] The right hon. Gentleman accepted that statement. Then he would ask the right hon. Gentleman who framed the Estimates, who did he consult as to the £20,000 for the Great Southern and Western Railway and for the other items? Last year, also, the right hon. Gentleman spoke with satisfaction of the fact that local councils were now in existence; and he said that he would be better able to deal with this matter in accordance with Irish views than if these bodies were not in existence. Did the right hon. Gentleman ask a single county council for its opinion as to any of these items? He did not. Yet those bodies were the creation of a Conservative Government. The right hon. Gentleman, during the last few days, gave a proof that they could be trusted to deal with the administration of the Labourers Acts; yet they were not to be consulted on the spending of this money, in which every one of them was deeply interested. Of course, the last persons the right hon. Gentleman would consult were the representatives of the Irish people. They were pariahs and outlaws. They might be good enough to put into gaol, but not for purposes of consultation with reference to the expenditure of public funds. The right hon. Gentleman placed the Estimate on the Paper without consulting a single representative of the people of Ireland. That was a bad sign as regarded the future.

His hon. and learned friend the Member for Waterford sympathised with the demand for the drainage of Bann. They all did. But he wished it to be known that the question of the Bann drainage was not in a different position from the drainage of the Suck, Barrow, or Shannon. The right hon.

Gentleman the Member for North Armagh complained that works had been instituted and left half finished for the drainage of the Bann. That was the case in connection with the drainage of the Shannon, Suck, and Barrow. The whole item really suggested to him that it was a mere piece of deception on the part of some humourist of the Treasury. A sum of £50,000 was to be voted for the Bann at the rate of £1,000 a year. Therefore, the work of drainage would extend over the period of the average life of an Ulsterman. In 1889 the right hon. Gentleman was formally or informally connected with the Irish Government. He was then acting as the writer of very able letters for the Prime Minister, who was then Chief Secretary, letters which possessed a great deal of literary ability but very little wisdom. At that period the Prime Minister dealt with the question of drainage, and brought in four separate Bills which he asked the House to treat as one scheme. That showed how many complicated questions were involved. One matter was whether there was to be local control or not, and another was whether the landlords or the tenants should pay for the improvement. If no provision were made for the repayment of these loans, the result would be that the landlords would derive the whole benefit in the increased value of their land. What did the right hon. Gentleman mean by putting this £1,000 on the Estimates this year before he had brought in a measure to deal with all these questions as they occurred? Was it intended that there should be no Bill, and that this £1,000 was to be handed over to the Board of Works to do what they liked with. Was the right hon. Gentleman going to revert to the old system that Parliament itself had condemned, or adopt the new principle which recognised the right of those who had to provide the money having some voice in the expenditure of it? He was concerned that this £1,000 was a political bribe, and if the Ulster Members consented to it they deserved to be sold into slavery. It was a piece of political corruption which ought to be inquired into, and he was glad that the hon. Members from Ireland had induced the Government to allow them to discuss this matter as it was being discussed at the present moment. This Vote would be discussed every year, and those who followed him in the debate to-night would make it plain to the right hon. Gentleman that the most humiliating thing which Irish Members had to endure under the Union was the necessity of appealing to the right hon. Gentleman or any British Administration with regard to the disposal of Irish money.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) expressed his pleasure at the presence of the hon. Member for King's Lynn, who had rendered stalwart assistance to the Irish Members last year when they were endeavouring to get this Vote placed upon the Estimates. He agreed substantially with the general criticism of the hon. Member for Waterford, and, although he did not profess to represent all the Ulster Members, he thought he might say that that was the opinion of every Member on that side of the House. The first question he wished to deal with was that of the drainage of the Bann. He was interested in that question for more than one reason. The first Committee on which he sat in that House, in the year 1887, was one set up as part of the Unionist policy of the day, namely, the Committee on the Arterial Drainage of Ireland, and they inquired then very elaborately and with great minuteness into the whole question debated in the House to-day. He had no hesitation in giving his opinion now as to the reason why those labours came to nothing. The real truth was that it was the question of the rate upon catchment area which wrecked the whole proposal. The Chief Secretary had placed an Estimate of £1,000 on that Vote for the purpose of the Bann drainage. He wanted to ask him if he had made any arrangements with the local authority within the catchment area for the contribution of that £50,000 of which he spoke. Was he quite certain that they would fall in with this scheme of £100,000, of which they would have to pay £50,000? The next question he had to ask was, what was to be done with that £1,000? He thought he knew. Were they to have another engineering report? That would just be like the Board of Works all over. He could understand the Board of Works suggesting that their knowledge of the question was not quite ample enough, and it would be better to send down a couple of engineers to report on the whole question, and for that £1,000 would be of use. He hoped the Chief Secretary would tell them, and they should see what the answer was before voting. £1,000 was a sum which in itself was of no use ,and he had no belief and no faith in those drainage estimates. Hon. Members who had sat in the House twenty years would remember the drainage scheme for Lough Erne. An estimate was given by the engineer. That estimate was doubled, and then they had to come back again for more money, and the result was that both landlord and tenant around Lough Erne had been saddled with a drainage charge which militated seriously against the purchase and sale of land at this moment. He wanted to ask the specific question whether the authority in the catchment area affected by the drainage scheme would contribute their share of the amount? If they would not, there was no use in spending even £1,000.

The second Question he wished to refer to was the matter of the treatment of the training colleges. He was not quite certain that he agreed with the hon. and learned Member for Waterford's diagnosis of that part of the scheme. He was not sure that in 1890 absolute equality was agreed to between the denominational training colleges and the Government training college. There was no doubt that the denominational colleges received very liberal treatment—not more liberal than they deserved—although he opposed it at the time—one lived and learned, but this Vote was rendered necessary by common decency. He agreed with the hon. Member for Waterford that the question being reopened in that way from sheer necessity, the whole question was open and not that part of it alone which concerned the housing of the King's scholars in Marlborough Street College. And what he had said in the House and to the Chief Secretary was this, that the question of principle having been established and settled, namely, that those colleges ought to be a charge on the nation and that they ought not to be left to private enterprise, he had no other interest in it save that the equipment of those colleges should be adequate for the great work that they had to do. Therefore, he made no objection to grants to those colleges in Limerick, in Waterford, or in Belfast. He thought they ought to be supported. He had claimed for the undenominational college in Marlborough St. proper and adequate treatment, and he thought that treatment ought to be extended to all colleges honestly carrying on their work. He understood that the site would cost £15,000, and of course the site would have to be secured before the building could be started. Therefore, as only £10,000 appeared in the Estimate, unless the landlord was to be paid by instalments, the money now asked for would not even secure the site, still less commence the building.

On the question of railways he entirely agreed with the hon. and learned Member for Waterford in principle. He knew nothing personally about the Tralee and Dingle Railway, but the impression produced on his mind by what he had heard was that it was one of those numerous railway "jobs" which were from time to time perpetrated. By placing this railway grant on the fund, the Chief Secretary at once aroused a desire for similar treatment in other parts of the country. He did not think these railway matters ought to be put on the Development Grant at all, but, if they were to be, he would state what was the desire of his constituents. Two sessions ago a Bill was passed authorising the construction of the Newry and Tynan Railway. His constituents were deeply interested in the matter, because it would make a connection between the Clogher Valley Light Railway and a seaport. The Clogher Valley Railway was run at a cost of a shilling rate to the ratepayers of Tyrone. This new line would give them about 68 miles of railway, one staff would work the whole system, the same rolling stock would suffice, a great saving of expense would be effected, and, inasmuch as they were guaranteeing a considerable sum on the Clogher line, the Treasury would reap considerable advantage from its increased prosperity. The Great Northern Railway Company were opposed to the line, and the difficulty of his constituents was that they could not get through rates between any station on the Clogher line and England. The whole cost of the new line was estimated at £225,000, of which the locality offered to raise £150,000. The modest demand of his constituents was that, if railways were to come on this grant, the balance of £75,000 spread over three or five years was not too much to ask for a line of railway which would develop a part of the country greatly requiring development, and materially enhance the value of the railway already in operation. The Development Grant was in many respects a good idea, but it had the great disadvantage that it enabled the Treasury to avoid legitimate burdens on the Exchequer by pushing them on to this fund. Year by year they would find that being done. All through Irish history the Treasury had been a hard stepmother, doing nothing generously, and the real objection to the idea of the fund was that it just enabled the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say, "We cannot afford this or that; take it out of the Development Grant." He hoped the Chief Secretary would resist that tendency on the part of the Treasury, and the present debate would assist him in so doing. With regard to primary education and its needs, he agreed with all that had been said. Mr. Dale's report, over which he had glanced, was wholly against the sanitary condition of the schools, their equipment and everything else. Surely if that report had to be considered, the right hon. Gentleman could do something in the interim. Could he not at once allocate a portion of this fund to the removal of the defects revealed in that report, so that the sanitary condition might be improved and the teachers relieved from the burden of providing practically the whole of the equipment of the schools? He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would say he was prepared to do that, for by so doing he would remove many of the difficulties which had beset Members in the discussion of the matter.

MR. WYNDHAM said that although many hon. Members wished to take part in this debate, he thought the time had come when he ought to reply. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford and his right hon. friend and all who had taken part in this debate had necessarily gone at length and with considerable detail into a great many separate subjects not simple in themselves and indirectly raising a number of financial questions of complexity and importance; therefore he should have to ask the House to bear with him if his reply was somewhat lengthy in character and if he had to advance certain views on finance which he gathered would not, in every case, be readily accepted by hon. Members who sat for Irish constituencies. He would like to make three general observations. If they took the forthcoming financial year 1904–5, it must be acknowledged, he thought, that were this grant not in existence the probability of the Treasury expending large sums of money in Ireland upon public works was extremely remote, so remote that they might legitimately leave it out of account. The second general observation was that in England and Scotland, if money was voted for education or other purposes and not expended, the unexpended balance returned to the Treasury. As the hon. Member for Waterford had acknowledged, by this plan of the Development Grant that was avoided and thus a benefit special to Ireland was given. There was one other general observation. It was this, that in England and in Scotland education was supported out of the rates, but that was not the case in Ireland. Therefore, although it was perfectly true that the condition of the Irish schools was not one which they could contemplate with satisfaction, it was also true there was no local assistance towards remedying their present condition. Therefore there was a need of scrutinising carefully any proposals for spending money upon this or that need in respect of education until, perhaps, a somewhat fuller consideration had been given to the whole matter. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford said this Estimate stood on a different footing from any other Estimate with which they had to deal. That was true. It was so true that he had presented the Estimate in a form which was unusual, and which would be indefensible if it was in the least like any other Estimate. But it was not. He had deliberately presented this Estimate as a skeleton Estimate—that was to say, it left a large unexpended balance under this Development Grant. He had presented it not only as a skeleton Estimate, but as a tentative Estimate; that was to say, it would be subject to variation in the light of the discussion of that afternoon. Everybody agreed that it was very necessary to have a preliminary discussion. Some might say that, had he given more arduous attention to his duties since the last session, he could have collected all the opinions which might legitimately have been advanced. He might express regret for not having done so, but he offered no apology. He thought any one who had listened to the discussion that afternoon would feel that except for a discussion in which all who were interested could take part, it would be beyond the power of any man to collect the general sense of the Irish people. It should be borne in mind that this Development Grant was intimately connected with the finances of the Land Act, and that he had to devote the bulk of his time to the administration of that Act and to thinking out the financial provisions of that great measure. Therefore anything put into this grant ought in his judgment to receive the support of Irish opinion. There was, however, this other factor, that nothing could be put into the grant unless it was assented to, on financial grounds, by the Treasury, who in this matter did not attempt to interfere with the policy of the Irish Government as accepted by Irish opinion. The Treasury was entitled to see that no considerable continuing charges were put upon this grant without considering that this grant was connected with the Irish Land Act. In respect of education the Treasury and any person interested in the economic devotion of money to Irish needs, and in that category he included all Irish Members of Parliament, must feel that some regard must be paid to the use of monies which were now being divided in ways which he would not call wasteful but which were bringing in a very slight return. They could not proceed on the method of saying, "Here is an admirable object—I will give £24,000 in one case and £18,000 in another," without taking some weeks to consider such an important document as Mr. Dale's report. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford was not to suppose that he was saying that nothing was to be done until he had a scheme revolutionising primary education. It was only reasonable, when a document of such importance had been presented only three or four days, to read it before putting it as a charge on the grant.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: There is nothing new in this report at all, and everybody connected with the schools knew these things before.

Mr. WYNDHAM did not think that destroyed his argument. There were many other heads upon which expenditure was needed and some upon which economies could be effected, and that being so it was proper to consider the subject more or less as a whole. He would come to the education part of the hon. Member's speech later. He thought they would expect from him some observations in regard to what had been described as a grave matter, namely, that £50,000 a year should be placed as a first charge upon the Development Grant for four years, and the hon. and learned Member for Waterford had expressed the opinion that it ought to bear all the losses which might be inherent to the flotation and management of the stock. The hon. Member did not impute any breach of faith in any words he used on the First Reading of the Land Act, and the whole purport of his remarks was clear and he apprehended its meaning.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND said the words seemed to him quite ambiguous and capable of two meanings.

Mr. WYNDHAM said it was impossible to suppose that a charge only imposed for four years could meet losses which were continued for sixty-eight-and-a-half years, and it was obvious that something else was contemplated to meet losses if the issue was to start below par. It was to the interests of Ireland that this sum of £200,000, which was made up of four instalments of £50,000 a year, should be treated as a separate working balance, for if a sufficient working balance were not kept it would be necessary to have recourse at irregular periods to the guarantee fund for temporary advances to meet such charges as that on dividends and stock payable before the annuities came in. The retention of £200,000 as a working balance would buoy these temporary drafts, and the net charge on the guarantee fund of each year would enable the final charges to be taken out in a convenient manner in each year, thus ensuring a minimum of inconvenience to all concerned. He would give an example of what had happened. There was this working balance of £200,000, £50,000 of which had already been paid, accounting for the balance of the sum carried over from last year. The condition of the money market had been such as to render it expedient in the permanent interests of Ireland to delay the issue of this stock for a short period. The small initial advances which had to be made in respect of purchases completed had been made out of that £50,000. If there were no working balance available they would have had to float perhaps £150,000 worth of stock at an inconvenient period, and one prejudicial to the interests of Ireland. Keeping that margin they could issue their stock in a convenient amount. The other principal object for which that working balance was retained, was to meet the losses due to having to pay a dividend on the stock when issued before the instalments from the Treasury were received. It was impossible to administer a great fund like the Irish Land Purchase Fund, with payments into it and out of it taking place at different times, unless a considerable working balance was kept capable of being used at any time to tide over temporary difficulties. The hon. Member might wish the money came from another source, but he would scarcely dispute the necessity and advisability of having such a working balance. He might say in passing he thought the hon. and learned Member took a gloomier view than he was prepared to take of the loss likely to accrue from floating below par. The hon. Member mentioned £26,000. That would mean issuing at £5. He trusted they would do better then that.

Now he came to the hon. and learned Member's second point. He illustrated it by speaking of the Bann drainage. He said that ought not to be done until something had been done for primary education, and that he for his part objected to every other item which appeared in these Estimates. Did hon. Members quite grasp what was the principle of this Development Grant? The hon. and learned Member himself had stated it quite accurately. It was that if they were not prepared with a mature scheme carrying with it the general Irish assent, they were not to lose the money. That was secured. But it was also stated very clearly last year that capital charges, not continuing charges, could be placed upon this grant whilst they were waiting to deal with some prominent question which would need a recurring grant. If the hon. and learned Member said he objected to the Bann drainage or to some railway scheme (as he did) that was valid, but there was no general ground for saying such expenditure ought not to be put on this grant until a considerable amount of it had been devoted to education. He freely admitted he was committed to the £24,000 a year. He had prepared these Estimates under the circumstances he had decribed.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.) asked if it was intended to provide a second teacher?

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, in schools with an average attendance of fifty, instead of sixty as hitherto. In this matter the Treasury agreed with him, and he had endeavoured to alter it, but he was too late. He saw no difficulty in dealing with that in a Supplementary Estimate later on, and when he had also considered what economies ought to be effected. He would take the items which stood in the Estimates and consider the criticisms which had been passed upon them. The hon. and learned Member had referred to the Bann. He had an argument to adduce in favour of the Bann drainage which had not yet been put forward by any hon. Member who had spoken. He held, in considering the Development Grant, that some account might fairly be taken of the allocation of money under other grants, and he reminded hon. Members opposite of the undertakings given in respect of Bann drainage nearly two years ago when he was endeavouring to pass the Marine Works Act through the House. He did on that occasion undertake that the Bann should have the earliest favourable consideration of the Government. He referred to that in the discussion on the Education Estimates, and he understood that hon. Members opposite took no very grave exception to his view that there was a scheme due in respect of the River Bann. His hon. friend the Member for South Tyrone had asked what the £1,000 was for. It was a token Vote on this Estimate. [An Hon. MEMBER: What is that?] It was an indication that he had not given the go-by to his pledges. He would now answer the second Question of the hon. Member, which was whether this was going to be spent on plans for works. His answer was no. The Board of Works were engaged in studying this question, because they had a story to tell as well as his right hon. and gallant friend. The Board did not accept his view. The preliminary charges for any scheme for the drainage of the River Bann were not being paid for out of the Development Grant, they would fall on the Estimates for the Board of Works. It had been suggested by his hon. friend and specially by the Member for North Dublin that the Development Grant would be a kind of shield and buckler to the Treasury in defending them from any onslaughts by Members interested in Ireland, and preventing the general taxpayer from contributing to Irish purposes. That was not the case. Here was one example showing that the ordinary expenses of the Board of Works came upon the Estimates. There were other automatic increases on the Estimates, especially under the head of education. Yesterday the House passed a Supplementary Estimate which was not quite so large as he intended it to be, but still a very substantial Estimate of £29,400. It could not, therefore, be said that he was an accomplice of the Treasury in trying to put ordinary demands on the Development Grant. The ordinary expenditure for education under heads which had hitherto been sanctioned would of course come upon the Estimates, but he would remind hon. Members that this Development Grant must be held to be, as was stated by him last year, to be in the nature of an indemnity of the Treasury for perfectly new demands of an educational character. It would not be reasonable as between Ireland and Great Britain that Ireland should take the equivalent for the £1,400,000 paid in respect of English education, and also a further sum from the Treasury for education purposes. Primarily this £185,000 was available for education in Ireland. He had stated why he had put this in as a skeleton Estimate, and he would not repeat what he had said.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Will the right hon. Gentleman indicate what the local authorities said about the contribution.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): What will happen to this scheme of drainage of the Bann if the people along the river find themselves unable to pay the extra £50,000?

MR. WYNDHAM said he thought his hon. friend had put the question quite clearly. He was not prepared to say at present that the Government ought to pay the whole of this charge. If need be, he would go at almost any length into the Bann question, but he did not feel quite justified in taking that course before the whole House, therefore he would prefer only to state the view entertained by the Board of Works that it was not quite proper that the Government should pay for the whole of this scheme. The Board disputed many of the contentions put forward by his right hon. and gallant friend. He had referred to the Bills introduced in 1888 and 1889, but it was never contemplated in those Bills that the taxpayer ought to pay the whole of the charges. On the contrary the Bann was quite a small part. The total estimate was £60,000 and the public Exchequer was only going to contribute £20,000. His own proposal was a larger one, but it had broken down because the people in the area would make no contribution. His hope was that now that Ireland had got local self-government the bodies representing large areas might associate themselves with this House in carrying out schemes of a widely beneficial character. But if they did not, he could not disguise from his hon. friend that his task with the Exchequer would be such a difficult one that he very much doubted if it would be entirely a success. In Great Britain money was not expended on objects of this character at all. This was a special treatment of Ireland by which public money was spent on the drainage of rivers and the construction of railways—a special treatment which ought to be given to Ireland and which he had always advocated—but he thought it was treatment which must in future be forthcoming from this Development Grant as he should proceed to explain.

Dealing with the Marlborough Street College, he said that the site was estimated to cost £15,000, but he was informed by the Commissioners who had the management of education that they had £5,000 available for this purpose, and therefore he had only put down £10,000 in the Estimate. In reply to a Question put to him this afternoon, he gave his view of the Marlborough Street Training College question. He had gone into the matter very carefully and had no doubt whatever in his own mind that when the compromise effected by the present Prime Minister was carried out, the other training colleges in Dublin would get a better grant than the Marlborough Street College. It was on grounds of sanitation and public decency that money was to be spent on the Marlborough Street College. He understood therefore that no objection was taken to this *per se*, but that in dealing with the Marlborough Street College they ought to deal with the provincial colleges. The hon. Member knew that that plea had been put forward before. He called these colleges provincial, not as a derogatory epithet, but as distinguishing them from the metropolitan training colleges. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford would see that that would involve a further charge of an educational character, and he must believe that any such charge must be considered in relation to other charges which he and the hon. Member advocated. He advocated that the charge of £24,000 a year should be placed on the Development Grant for the purpose he had described. Many people advocated some immediate expenditure of money on technical instruction. He would not go into that in detail. The hon. and learned Member for Wexford had repeated arguments to-day which no doubt he urged on the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the debate the other day. He would not reopen that debate, as he would only deal with the resources at his command. In his judgment technical instruction would have to be defrayed out of this Development Grant. He was told after very careful inquiry that at least £18,000 a year in addition to the £62,000 a year which the new Department could now demand for that purpose—taking the Development Grant into account—ought to be devoted to technical instruction in Ireland. That would make £80,000 in all. There was another important head upon which the best opinions held that some considerable expenditure should be made, but he said that in this the first year of the Irish Development Grant he should not be asked to commit himself to an indefinite number of proposals which involved considerable continuing charges on this grant. On the one hand, the fact that this grant was hypothecated to a certain extent under the financial provisions of the Land Act had to be considered, and in the second place, he had to look to the fact that a good many of the charges for education which ought to fall on this grant would fall upon it. Therefore, he would not pledge himself to any one, and certainly not to two or three proposals until some account was taken of the other expenditure which would be demanded, and some attempt was made to effect economies *pari passu.* They knew that a great deal of money had been wasted in education in Ireland, and it was not in the interests of the country that that should continue. He claimed that they should proceed with some economic caution before they attempted to sanction any further expenditure at all. He believed the hon. and learned Member for Waterford took no exception to the provision made for the other training colleges.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: What I said on that point was that of course this fulfils the demand made for a long time, but that it puts the money on this fund rather than on the ordinary Estimates.

Mr. WYNDHAM said that was foreign to his general argument, and whether the hon. and learned Member accepted the general argument he could not tell. This was a new charge never acceded to before, and if it was to be charged to the Treasury, clearly it must fall on the Development Grant and not upon the ordinary Estimates. A great deal had been said in the course of the debate about the Tralee and Dingle Railway, and he should like to say a few words on that head. The hon. and learned Member was mistaken in supposing that any communication he had had with the Great Southern and Western Railway Company had entered into the question of the £93,000. That was not so. He had nothing to do with that. That matter he left to the hon. and learned Member to fight out with the railway company and the Treasury, as it was not his business. Why did he interest himself in the Tralee and Dingle Railway? He felt bound to take some account of the allocation of other Irish moneys to the different parts of Ireland. The Marine Works had placed a sum of £100,000 and the savings upon other sums, at the disposal of the Government, for the purpose of assisting the congested districts of Ireland and also in Clare. He was trying to make an intelligent statement, but he admitted that the ramifications of the different funds and claims ran into each other and made it rather a desperate enterprise. He would not be led away into explaining why Clare was included. In the main the funds provided under that Act were for the western seaboard of Ireland. Kerry was on the western seaboard and that county had Tralee Harbour. It would not be proper to spend the money on the harbours in Kerry. It was well known that certain baronies were heavily rated in respect of that harbour, and also for the Tralee and Dingle Railway. The Member for Kerry and others had approached him and the Treasury again and again, asking that these baronial guarantees should be decreased. The Treasury had always refused, and, he believed, rightly, to deal with the problem in that way, on the ground that when any locality entered into binding contracts with the Government to pay a certain sum per annum on certain terms in respect of benefits received, they could not, without creating an unfortunate precedent, alter those terms at a later date. The only way in which the ratepayers' grievances in Kerry could be met was by the Government spending such a sum on the Tralee and Dingle Railway as would induce the Great Southern and Western Company to take over the working of the railway. The policy of this and every Government was, rightly or wrongly, not to take up the working charges of any railway, but to build the railway and then hand it over to a company to work. This had been described as a dole to the Great Southern and Western Railway. It was certainly not an adequate inducement, because the company maintained they would lose £1,500 a year by accepting the bargain. He maintained they would lose only £500 a year, but it was indubitable that they would not make but lose by the Tralee and Dingle scheme taken alone.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: May I ask if they have not also stipulated that it should be regarded as part of the Tralee and Dingle scheme that they should be relieved of obligations resting on them respecting the Cork and Fermoy Railway?

Mr. WYNDHAM said he had never had that put to him before. If they proved that they would not lose money they would deal with it as a separate issue. If hon. Members for Ireland desired to see Kerry relieved in this matter he hoped the company would receive more lenient treatment from the hands of Irish Members. His business was to use the Tralee and Dingle Railway with the object of relieving the Kerry rates. In view of the allocation of money under the Marine Works Act he maintained it was fair he should prosecute that effort, provided it did not involve too large a charge on this fund. He would not pursue the argument about the £93,000 for the Cork and

Fermoy Railway. They could not get blood out of a stone. If the railway had not got the money it could not construct both lines. It was worth while considering whether they should not be encouraged to do the one which the greater number of the people of Ireland desired, rather than the one which was desired by only 300 people on the proposed line. That, again, was a matter for the hon. Member and not for him. He should be very glad, if he were asked, to use his good offices with the railway directors concerned. His desire was to reduce the rates in Kerry and to see the bridge over the River Lee built, because the fishing and early vegetable industries could not be what they ought to be until that communication was made.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): Is the railway to be handed over to the Great Southern and Western Railway without any obligation whatever as to the protection of trades in other parts of the country?

MR. WYNDHAM said he would not follow the interruption. His argument was that as Kerry did not benefit under the Marine Works Act there was a certain claim on the part of Kerry to preferential treatment. The Rosslare and Fishguard Line and the Dramahaire Railway scheme were proper subjects for consideration in the future; but in the first place he must admit the claim of primary education. He could not spend this money for any other purpose, but it was generally agreed after they had a flotation of the land stock and they were able to take a more favourable view of the financial future, if they could then find a plan for meeting the needs of primary education and there remained some sums over, they might be devoted to the Newry and Keady Railway. The hon. Member for North Dublin asked him about the sum of £118,000 of savings. They would be devoted in accordance with the general opinion of Ireland. The question of the Queen's College was also raised. The action of the Treasury was not so ludicrous as had been represented. The Treasury said they would pay half if somebody else would pay the other half. He understood that the late Mr. Harland, whose loss they all deplored, had intimated that he would pay the other half. Private persons had spent money on other buildings but not on this college, and the Treasury desired to complete this building before they went into other matters.

MR. CLANCY: How is the right hon. Gentleman going to consult Irish opinion in regard to the future?

MR. WYNDHAM said a debate such as they had that afternoon formed a very good method, and he should use every other means he could. He had been asked to make a general statement on the finance of this grant. The hon. Gentleman had asked him what was to be done with the savings. Well, he had always held that it was for the best interests of Ireland, and the true interests of the Treasury, that the savings effected in the course of Irish Government should presumably, as a matter of right and practice, be devoted to needs which might be felt in Ireland, but which were not felt in Great Britain. Exception was sometimes taken to his argument on that head. He had heard it said by hon. Members sitting for English constituencies, that considering the proportionate contribution of Ireland for Imperial purposes, she was not entitled to any exceptional treatment; but that argument would not bear the test of examination. He contended that the allocation of the savings effected in the course of Irish Government to Irish purposes was based upon economic facts—upon the fact that Ireland's arrested development was not only an evil for her, but deprived her of all financial elasticity, and it so happened that Ireland's proportionate contribution was smaller than it might otherwise have been. Few people felt that it was possible to differentiate the taxation as between the two countries. If the same taxes were imposed in both countries Ireland, being the poorer country, would produce a relatively smaller amount for these taxes, if they were maintained unaltered over a period of years, than they would produce in England. Again, if higher taxes were imposed, such as a war tax, the returns from England would quickly respond; but in Ireland they were beginning to reach the danger point at which taxation ought not to be increased. That being so, Ireland's proportionate contribution must be less than that of Great Britain. He proposed to realise as many savings as possible and to place them in the first instance on the Development Grant. That was merely an extension of the principle of the Development Grant, which he thought a useful extension. There was, for example, a saving of £150,000 now lying idle in Ireland to the credit of the Fines and Fees Fund. He proposed to bring in a measure which would carry that balance into the Development Grant Fund. There was another balance of something like £71,000 of the Local Taxation Account. That balance he should also propose to carry to the same account. There was also a sum of £50,000 which was the unexpended balance under the Labourers Acts. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had expressed the opinion that that sum should be preserved in some way to the labourers of Ireland. He should be glad to consider that opinion, but if that sum were also added to the Development Grant Fund, that would not preclude them from devoting it to the labourers at a later period. But if there was a suspicion as to the ultimate fate of that money it was not for him to press his opinion. It would not, however, go very far in effecting any useful object under the Labourers Acts. There were other savings which could be effected. The other day Mr. Justice Barton was transferred to a vacancy which had occurred in the Chancery side of the High Court of Judicature in Ireland, and it was not the intention of the Irish Government to fill up the vacancy created by that transferance. A saving of £3,500 a year would thus be effected. In the measure which he had mentioned they contemplated reserving the right of saving another £3,500 a year on a vacant judgeship, but regard must be had to the exigencies of the public service. There would be a saving of £7,000 a year, and possibly more, and that, he suggested, should also be carried over to the credit side of the Development Grant.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked how much had been saved on the constabulary and other services and what had become of it?

MR. WYNDHAM said he had undertaken to institute economies in the cost of Irish Government which would lead to a saving of £250,000 in five years. These economies had been mainly effected in regard to the Royal Irish Constabulary in accordance with a carefully thought out scheme framed with the entire concurrence of the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary. He believed that they could make changes in the organisation of that force and benefit it at the same time. They would have fewer but better men if they had a smaller establishment. It would be necessary to work out the reduction of the establishment in such a way as not to inflict injury upon the existing members of the force. Nobody was being turned out of the force. The reduction would be effected by reducing the number of recruits taken each year. The saving last year was £18,000, next year it would be £61,000, the year after £97,000, the year after that £132,000 and so on up to £238,000 on the Royal Irish Constabulary in 1909. There was also a saving on the Dublin Metropolitan Police of £2,500; a saving of £3,000, and ultimately of £4,000, in law charges; and savings on reformatory and industrial schools of £1,100; on the Land Commission of £1,800; on prisons of £3,000, and on resident magistrates of £500. These savings must follow automatically on what had already been done and would give a sum of £245,900 in five years. But there were others, including some further savings on resident magistrates, which would bring up the savings in five years to £250,000. Two years later these savings would amount to £278,000. In respect of £250,000 the Treasury must have the full benefit of the savings, but when they increased above £250,000, then in accordance with what he had said, they might be treated as the other savings already realised were now being treated; that was to say, unless there was some cause shown to the contrary, they would be available for the removal of economic defects in Ireland, or for other Irish purposes. In his judgment it would be wiser, when such savings accrued, to put them into the Development Grant, have a discussion year by year, and devote them year by year to the needs of Ireland in accordance with the wishes of those entitled to them.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said he thought the House would agree that they had listened to a profoundly interesting speech from the Chief Secretary. It was a speech specially interesting to his hon. friends, because the right hon. Gentleman had been able to annonnce his entire conversion to some of the demands and to some of the principles which, for nearly a quarter of a century, they had been vainly urging on the Government of the day. His hon. friends who, like himself, had grown old in the Parliamentary fight, would know that one of the opinions they had endeavoured, during that period, to impress on the House of Commons and on the Government was that the Government of Ireland was extravagant, and that it was extravagant because it was corrupt. The right hon. Gentleman did not put it quite in that way; but when he announced that he had been able to make large reductions in the cost of the constabulary, the judiciary, and even the resident magistrates, it reminded him of Falstaff's proportion of bread and sack. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had set the seal of truth on the principle which they had always urged, that the Government of Ireland was one of the costliest as well as one of the worst in the world. He regretted that the House was empty during the early part of the sitting. It was always very regrettable that English Members, who because of their majority were mainly responsible for the government of Ireland, would not favour Irish debates with their presence until the time for voting arrived. Had English Members been present they would have learned a most remarkable and instructive lesson as to the attitude of Irish opinion towards the Government. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Armagh delivered an able and amusing speech, which was listened to with pleasure in all parts of the House. The right hon. Gentleman told the story of the drainage of the Bann, and he said it was a story which would not be possible in any other country except Ireland. He agreed, although it might be possible in Turkey and in some parts of Russia, where the supplies from the Treasury were great, and where the amount which reached the people was small. £167,000 had been spent on the drainage of tne Bann; yet, in spite of that vast expenditure and the taxation which the people paid with exemplary patience, they had the satisfaction of seeing their lands submerged year after year. He had ventured to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman across the floor of the House, and had ventured to describe it as an object lesson of Dublin Castle rule, and he welcomed the right hon. Gentleman as one of the critics who had found the Dublin Castle form of Government in Ireland the most rotten form of Government in existence. The right hon. Gentleman had also said that while England could give a large return in taxation, it was because it was increasing in wealth and population, and that Ireland could only give a small return because wealth in Ireland was almost stationary and the population was decreasing. Those were the blesssings obtained by Ireland by this form of Government. He quite admitted that the right hon. Gentleman could not be expected to know the whole of the details of Irish administration when his attention had been so taken up with the administration of the Land Act. In fact he had not expected to see the right hon. Gentleman in his place this evening. Governments had gone out on smaller majorities on previous occasions, and on less important questions—ammunition for instance. He was reminded of the words of Macbeth—

> "The time has been
> That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
> And there an end; but now they rise again,
> With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
> And push us from our stools."

Or, in other words, from the Treasury Bench. The right hon. Gentleman, in summing up the effect of the indissoluble union, of which he was one of the greatest advocates, had said that the predominant partner was increasing in wealth and population, whilst the country it was governing from this House was dwindling in population and stationary in wealth. The right hon. Gentleman had exactly stated the case for Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman had stated this was a tentative Estimate. He advised the right hon. Gentleman to withdraw it now, and bring it forward in a more complete form later in the session, and then, after the instruction which he had derived from this debate—and nobody would deny that the debate had been very instructive—and after further consultation with those who were entitled to speak for Ireland, he might bring in a revised Estimate, and thus save a division this evening, which must occur if the Estimate were pressed in its present form. He objected to the fundamental principle of the Estimate. Money was given to England for education and an equivalent grant was given to Ireland for the same purpose. That was the principle which underlay the equivalent grant, yet in this Estimate they were dealing with money given to Ireland for education in Ireland which it was proposed to spend on everything except education. The right hon. Gentleman was not only acting quite in accord with the topsy-turvy system that regulated everything Irish under the rule of this Parliament, but justified his action by saying that certain works were required in different parts of Ireland. What guarantee had the Irish people that the educational money which was to be spent on the Bann would be better spent than the money which had already been spent in the past. What guarantee was there that ten or fifteen years hence they would not see another Chief Secretary coming forward with a demand for another £100,000 to be spent quite as improperly in this way. The proposal was an unjust proposal. It was never intended that the equivalent grant should be made a shield for the Imperial Exchequer and that by the expenditure of the equivalent grant the Imperial Exchequer should be saved from carrying out those undertakings which should be carried out by Imperial expenditure.

Did the House realise the state of education in Ireland? It would be a revelation to English Members to hear that in Ireland at the present day poor boys and girls were going to school with sods of turf under their arms, to light the fires in the schoolrooms provided by a benevolent Government, and this was just as much a living institution as it was in his boyhood. Hon. Members opposite might think he was drawing on his imagination but he would support what he said by a reference to the Blue-book. Mr. Dale in his report stated that the complaints of the inspectors as to the inadequacy of the heating of country schools were only too well founded, and that fuel in the form of turf was in most cases supplied by the pupils. There was a picture of Irish schools! Sanitation practically did not exist. The right hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh claimed that Belfast had saved the credit of Ireland. As a great centre of native industry all Irishmen were proud of Belfast, though some might hold that its political opinions would be better if more rational, and that its Christianity would not be less perfect if it were of a less militant and aggressive character. But even in Belfast—again quoting Mr. Dale's report—the North Thomas Street School, containing about fifty children, was held in a most unhealthy room, seven-feet seven-inches high, lighted and ventilated by a few tiny windows about three-feet by one-foot six-inches in size. The worst schools in the most reactionary districts of England were far superior to the best schools in Ireland. What excuse had the right hon. Gentleman given for this state of things? Simply that the report was only three days old. But all these matters had been complained of year after year by the inspectors of schools. For two generations they had been calling attention to the evils referred to in the report. Everybody was agreed that the inner drainage of Ireland was as bad as it could be. Numerous speakers had referred to the deplorable intellectual condition of that country. Was there anything sound in Ireland? The extravagance and corruption of the Government had been brought before the House by no less a person than the Gentleman responsible for that Government. Was it not time for Parliament seriously to consider whether the present state of things was one which, for the safety and honour of the Empire, any more than for the benefit of the people of Ireland, should be allowed to go on? He believed that some of the facts stated in the debate would remain in the minds of those who had heard them, and that Members, at any rate on that side of the House, would be strengthened in the conviction that something required to be done to raise Ireland from her present position. It had been said that Belfast was more prosperous than the rest of Ireland, because of its intellectual freedom. Intellectual freedom! What Ireland was suffering from was intellectual starvation. What she wanted was an intellectual awakening, but how could that awakening be expected when the schools were such that the children themselves had to bring sods to make their own fires? If anything were wanted to mark more deeply this tragedy of the intellectual and material decadence of a country under alien government, it might be found in the fact that these people, starved of education, were the very people whose forefathers, centuries ago, before Oxford was able to teach, or Cambridge to instruct the people, disputed philosophy and theology in every University of Europe, from Paris to Bologna, where learning and religion had to be taught.

MR. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) was understood to express a doubt whether Mr. Harland had offered to provide the remaining half of the cost of certain buildings connected with Queen's College, Belfast. It could not be denied that that institution had done a great work, and that it would do more if it were not starved in every way by the Government. More than ten years ago, he was a member of a deputation which endeavoured to induce the Government of the day to do something for the college, and they were then told that the Government were willing to assist if the people of the locality proved themselves to be sincerely anxious to improve the condition of the college by supplying certain funds. They had supplied £50,000 or £60,000, and still the Government had done nothing. They were now proposing to provide the highest class of technical education, and Belfast had offered £10,000 for the erection of engineering buildings and the provision of instruction in the highest branches of the subject; but the scheme could not be properly carried out without assistance from the Government. It was hardly fair for the Government to urge the locality to make special efforts, and then, when the efforts had been successfully made, to decline to give the help that was necessary. As to primary education, everybody was agreed that improvement was absolutely necessary, and he believed the Government did not deny it. He could only regret that the Developement Grant did not propose to deal more liberally with primary education.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.) reminded the Chief Secretary that the report which had been referred to was presented in September last year, and therefore instead of having had this report for three days, he had had it for many months, and the right hon. Gentleman and the Government could have consulted about everything that was said in condemnation of the unsatisfactory conditions of education in Ireland. Did the Chief Secretary wish to devote this grant to this, that, and the other scheme? He had stated that he intended to add £24,000 to the grant in order that the schools might be better staffed. He was glad the right hon. Gentleman was going to do that, because nothing was more wanted than that the staff of teachers should be increased. He hoped the Chief Secretary would take into his consideration the subject which had been so fully described by every hon. Member who had spoken to-day, namely, the question of heating and sanitation in Irish schools. Any persons who knew anything of the condition of Irish schools would be ready to admit that if they were to improve education they would have to begin by making the surroundings of the children such as would instruct them in ideas of cleanliness. This change was essential if Irish education was to be improved. These reforms could be done at once if only a serious effort was made. There was no possibility of dealing with education properly until this, as well as every other subject connected with the government of Ireland, was placed in the hands of the Irish people.

It had been said that the people of Ireland took no interest in technical education, but at that time they had no power to levy a rate for technical instruction. What had happened in Ireland as the result of the Local Government Act of 1898? A great change had been effected, and the Irish people taxed themselves for technical education, and they were now engaged in a scheme all over Ireland which, in five or ten years, would undoubtedly have very great effect in the condition of Ireland. They ought to do the same thing with regard to elementary education, and let the people have something to say in regard to it, instead of permitting it to be managed by Dublin Castle officials. He should welcome a scheme which would give the Irish people an opportunity of taxing themselves for that greatest of all interests, the education of their own children. No man had more strongly advocated that the whole of this £185;000 should go untouched to Irish education. The Chief Secretary had stated that works which urgently needed some help should be carefully considered. He asked the House to listen to a few figures with regard to the Dingle Railway. In the year 1900, for that railway alone, a tax of 2s. 10d. in the £ was imposed upon a district which at that time was wholly congested. In 1902 that rate was 2s. 8d.; in 1903, 3s. 10½d.; in 1904, 3s. 6½d. How could they expect a district like that to bear the burden of a railway? Was it fair that this congested district should bear such an enormous charge while money was lying idle and was not being devoted even to educational purposes.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said the right hon. Gentleman had told them that this Estimate, so far as it dealt with the application of the money, was only a tentative Estimate, and he admitted that it must be altered. Would he now consent to withdraw it and after further consideration bring up a new Estimate? [MINISTERIAL cries of "No, no!"] Hon. Members cried out "No, no," but they knew nothing at all about it, and the Chief Secretary would readily understand his point. He did not want to divide the House, but he should like to know if the right hon. Gentleman would carry out his suggestion to withdraw this tentative Estimate and bring up a new one.

MR. WYNDHAM said he was afraid he could not accede to that suggestion. He had been obliged to put it in this form because it had to be in by a certain date. He agreed that it was tentative, and would be modified on those points he had mentioned, and he should bring in an Estimate in substitution for this one.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 239; Noes, 128. (Division List No. 57.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Aird, Sir John
Allhusen, AugustusHenryEden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt.Hon.Sir.H
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt.Hon. A.J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Captain C.B.(Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt.HnGeraldW.(Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn.J.A.(Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir JohnCharles Ready
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of.
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, Sir HoratioD.(Chatham
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, SirT.R.(Tower Hamlets
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dorington, Rt.Hon. Sir John E.

Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S.W.
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gore, Hn G.R.C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords. N.W.
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Horner, Frederick William
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon, James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N.R
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H (Dumfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick G.
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Pym, C. Guy
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hon. M. W. Stalybridge
Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir Harry S. (Limehouse
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. Edw. J.
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith H. C. (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randall
Crombie, John William
Cullinan, J.

Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings.
Ellice, Capt. EC(S. Andrw'sBghs
Emmott, Alfred
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hammond, John
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leamy, Edmund
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Murnaghan, George
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Pirie, Duncan V.
Price, Robert John
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R (Northants
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Walton, John Lawson (Leeds, S.
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Thomas Esmonde and Captain Donelan.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, Mr. SPEAKER, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 15, proceeded to put the Question necessary to dispose of the Report of the Vote.

Question, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution," put, and agreed to.

EVENING SITTING.

BARNET DISTRICT GAS AND WATER BILL (BY ORDER).

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next (Evening Sitting).

WOMEN'S DISABILITIES.

SIR CHARLES McLAREN (Leicestershire, Bosworth) said the subject of the Motion, of which he had given notice, was one which, although controversial in many respects, was happily free from Party controversy in the House of Commons, and he could say with confidence that it would be supported as much on the Conservative as on the Liberal side. This subject had not been brought before the House of Commons since 1897, when a Bill introduced by Mr. Faithful Begg dealing with the subject was read a second time by a majority of seventy-one, which majority represented all Parties in the House, and a majority of every section in favour of the Bill. He had no reason to doubt that having regard to the great interest which women took in political affairs, and the growing willingness which there was among politicians to avail themselves of the services of women, the House of Commons would be no less willing to grant them the Parliamentary franchise then they were six years ago. This question had been before the House of Commons for thirty-seven years. In 1867 it was introduced by Sir John Stuart Mill, who in the Reform Bill desired to substitute the word "person" for "man," but the entrance of women into political life was a startling proposition in those days, and the Motion was lost by a large majority. The political woman at that time was represented by her opponent to be an advocate of women's rights, unprepossessing in feature, badly dressed, obtrusive, a member of the shrieking sisterhood; in fact, possessed of all those qualities which are foreign to the feminine nature; in short, for a woman to enter political life was equivalent to unsexing herself. He ventured to think that point of view of this question had entirely vanished. Many other questions in which women had been interested during the last thirty years had been met with similar arguments and treatment, and yet women had now an established position in social politics. They had rights in property, certain rights over children, access to higher education, in which its branches and most of the professions were now open to them. Having regard to the enormous development of women's *status* in this country socially, he thought it was a little late in the day to object on principle to giving her an interest in the political machinery. She had her place on boards of guardians and parish councils, and up till recently also upon the school boards and vestries in London.

The time had come for a change. The doctrine of inherent incapacity of women had been put aside by the House over and over again. Notwithstanding the fact that women who had attained to great learning and high positions were made use of by candidates at elections to persuade illiterate voters to come, to the poll, they were placed behind the most illiterate class of men in regard to suffrage. A woman might be the owner of great estates or a prosperous business, and yet she had no right whatever to any voice in the question affecting her property or her interest in this country. In New Zealand and the whole of Australia, except Victoria, women had a vote for the State Legislature. Should the question of the consolidation of the Empire by colonial reciprocity come up for serious discussion it would be placed before the Australian Parliament, for which women had voted, and yet when it was placed before our Parliament, representing ten times the number of population, not a single woman in England would have a voice in the matter. On this point he quoted the opinion of Sir Edward Barton, the Premier of the colony, who, speaking to a deputation of ladies in London in 1902, said none of the anticipated evils had resulted from the granting of the suffrage to women in Australia, and that the success of the movement in the United Kingdom would tend to promote the unity of the Empire. The experience of the Colonies was convincing that we might with perfect safety extend the franchise to women. He also pointed out that among prominent statesmen in this country, the tendency was to appeal to the judgment of women on the great questions of the day. He quoted Lord Goschen, Mr. John Morley, and Lord Rosebery in illustration of this point, and argued that it was illogical to appeal to women to exert their influence in promoting the success of political principles unless they gave them the vote by which that influence could be made effective. He observed that among those who had appealed to women on the fiscal question was the Leader of the Opposition, while he claimed the Prime Minister, the President of the Board of Trade, and the Chief Secretary as actual supporters of women's suffrage. He contended that the extension of the franchise to women would leave the balance of Parties unaltered, asserting that this fact was demonstrated by the experience of the Australian Commonwealth. Our municipal elections, in which women voted, told the same tale. He combated the idea that this was a sort of fad on the part of a number of rich and active political women. The question had been taken up very largely by the working women, and especially by those women who were trades unionists. In the borough of Wigan the women trades unionists were supporting a candidate expressly in their own interests. He pointed out that since men had had the franchise there had been a steady growth in the wages of men, from 50 to 100 per cent. There had not been any similar rise in women's wages. They were paid far below the standard of men. The object of trades unions should be to prevent men's wages being dragged down to the level of women's wages, and the best way to do that was to level up the wages of women, which might be expected to follow the granting of political privileges to the sex.

The Resolution had been drawn widely for the purpose of giving every man in the House an opportunity of voting for it, and he observed that he did not ask for universal franchise, but merely that whatever rights of voting were now possessed by men should be extended to women. The Motion would enable any man to vote for it who had any belief whatever in the right of women to vote. He hoped that no attempt would be made by any of his hon. friends to draw a distinction and say that the Resolution was too wide or too narrow. He believed that by adopting the suggestion he had put forward they would very much simplify the register and very much simplify the elections, and, at the same time, be doing an act of substantial justice to women which would give them a very efficient representation. This Parliament had shown itself singularly free from prejudice. He did not think there had ever been any Parliament which had attacked so many institutions and upset so many settled ideas. He did not think he would appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite in vain. They had had some experience of late in what he might call heroic legislation, and surely it was not asking them to go very much further if he asked them to remove the last remaining disability of an electoral character on women and to admit them to the Parliamentary franchise.

COLONEL DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs) said that in rising to second this Resolution, suggesting such a drastic alteration in our scheme of franchise, he quite realised that, technically speaking, he could add but little, if anything, to what had been so admirably said by the proposer. He welcomed the chance, however, of emphasising by his action the fact that this was not a Party question, but one on which opinion was much divided. In 1897, on the last occasion on which the Motion was brought forward — but in the concrete shape of a Bill — it was proposed by a Unionist, seconded by an hon. and learned Member still in the House, the rejection was moved by a Unionist, and seconded by an old and justly respected Radical Member, and men of all shades of opinion spoke for and against, including the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth, whose approaching resignation of his seat was mourned alike by Unionists, Liberals, and Irish. The arguments then were very much what they were before, what they were now, and what he doubted not they would be, till this great and clamant reform was granted. Nobody but a hardened sinner, he was convinced, could resist the cogency, on the other hand, of the arguments for the proposal. Viewed historically, this was one of the solitary cases of reaction to be placed against this House. It was true that while women of a certain standing directly influenced the selection, not the election, of Members during the 15th, 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, and down practically to 1832, the year of the first great Reform Bill, it was but in an odd case of course now and then; but it was also true that for the first time in 1832 women were specifically barred from any share in the choice of Members of the Legislature. When the great era of local effort and government came, women were recognised as, at any rate, capable of administrative work, of interpreting and carrying into effect laws of great complexity, in the passing of which, however, they had no share. Then came another period of reaction, and judge-made law barred them first of all from sitting directly on county councils, while two years ago they were barred again from sitting on the borough councils which replaced the vestries, on which they could be elected; while in 1902 Parliament again took away from them all powers of sitting on the educational bodies which replaced the School Boards. That was how the matter stood now, and he could not put his case better than in the words of a lady, capable not only of sustained devotion to the interests of her sex, but also of putting her thoughts into eloquent words—

"In these days the trend of modern politics is setting always more and more strongly in the direction of social and domestic legislation, which affects the daily life and interests of women as much, and frequently more even, than those of men. In fact, there is no relation of our lives, whether as members of a family, as private citizens, or as wage-earners, which legislation does not touch, and women equally with men. Large sections of our legal statutes, such for example, as the Factory Acts, affect women and children almost exclusively, and is it not preposterous, then, to say that in respect to laws regulating their own most vital interests, and those of their children, not one woman, and not one mother, is to have any direct voice in the matter. To say that women have no rights or interest in the making of the laws is simply to say they have no rights or interest in the ordinary affairs of the family, or of life itself."

Now, why was this reform not to be granted? Let him take first the ground quoted of general want of intelligence. He had been told that some Members had found the general body of existing women voters incapable of grasping the general points at issue and forming an opinion. If true, which he doubted, what could they expect? If they deprived people of any hope of taking a certain position, they discouraged many of them from devoting time and intelligence to the study of the question. But the great acumen tacitly granted to men only came gradually. It was not all at once that men became the peers of Pitt, of Peel, of Disraeli, of Gladstone, or of Labouchere. These great exponents of our life were of no mushroom growth with no very good grounds for existence, but the product of selection, of development and training. Give women the chance, and it would be found that those who, it could not be denied, were possessed of faculties and powers at least as good as men, were not exceptions, but samples of the bulk. The House had been told about petticoat government by the hon. Member for Northampton. No amount of holding back of women from the exercise of their undoubted rights would save the men who were under this species of rule, abhorred by the hon. Member, from remaining under it, proving at once, as it did, women's capacity, and in the particular case referred to, the feebleness of man. Not one single man more would be ground down by the hem of the petticoat should this proposal be translated into law. Until they treated women in the co-operative sense, and not purely in the possessory sense, they would keep them in one rank of life as drudges and victims, and in the other as the butterflies of society and the toys of men. He asked hon. Members not to class them as was done in America, as among the criminals, idiots, and imbeciles—there were no peers in America—who were not entitled to vote. Then the hon. Member for Northampton brought forward blood-curdling stories of men washing babies and cleaning rooms, and evidently doing both very badly, while their wives were out canvassing, which only convinced him that the opposition was sinking to poor arguments indeed. At the worst, if true, why should not the men help the women and learn to do work which, as far as he could make out from the hon. Member, they did in such a way as to cause the minimum of advantage to the children with a maximum of pain.

Then there was the opposition of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Forest of Dean, who did not object to this Resolution, but who differed from any Bill which did not grant manhood and womanhood suffrage; in other words, that a woman of means and intellect, possessed of much property and capable of managing it, was not to get a vote which was enjoyed by her own servants till every being, calling himself a man, who was not an actual criminal or an absolute lunatic, was to be enfranchised. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth stated in his speech in 1897 that the time granted was too short, that it was impossible on a Wednesday afternoon to bring this matter to a conclusion. If that be so, how much less hope was there to-night, when they could only speak for three hours instead of five and a half as under the old Wednesday arrangement. But he differed from the right hon. Gentleman, holding as he did that, as this matter had been discussed for sixty years, this evening's debate would only, as it were, form the lens of a great camera focussing the opinion and argument of all these years into a collected and understandable picture. Might he say in conclusion, that he trusted this House would not shrink from doing anything but absolute justice to a claim from a body of would-be electors much more numerous than their own sex, a body, moreover, actuated by the laudable desire to have some share in the formation of laws, which although affecting men, touched women much more, not only in proportion, but in the intensity of results upon their life and happiness.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the disabilities of women in respect of the Parliamentary franchise, ought to be removed by legislation."—(*Sir Charles McLaren.*)

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said this was not the first time that he had addressed the House on this subject. On every occasion he had come forward as the champion of women against those wild spirits among men and women who wanted to foist a privilege on the vast majority of women who did not desire it. His hon. friend the Member for the Bosworth Division said that he did not desire that all women should have the franchise, but that it should be the same for women as for men. They could not go by what the mover of the Resolution said when that was in antagonism to the Resolution itself. The Resolution was: "That the disabilities of women in respect of the Parliamentary Franchise, ought to be removed by legislation." He was sure that his right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean would not say that he took the same view of the Resolution as the hon. Member for Bosworth. As far as he understood it the hon. Member for Bosworth, with Machiavellian tactics, moved a Resolution in certain terms in order to secure the widest support for it, and made a speech in another sense in order to capture the support of those who did not wish to go so far. Those were womanly tactics. He objected to them because they were not characterised by that amount of frankness that he liked to see displayed. What would be the effect of granting the franchise to all women? There were a great many more women than men in the country, and the preponderance was increased at election times owing to the fact that many men were occupied in work abroad. If the Resolution was adopted, therefore, the country would be absolutely in the hands of women. If there was a majority of women Heaven only knew how far they would go when they had the power. It was said that women had no influence at present. He denied this, and maintained that they exercised an enormous influence. Something had been said about the views of Lords Goschen and Rosebery on this question in connection with the fiscal controversy. Those two noble Lords were not illogical in their appeals about women, for they appealed to women to use the influence they had on men to induce them by blandishments, conversation, and so on, to take a right view of the fiscal question. Did any hon. Member suppose that when women obtained the vote they would be satisfied until they were allowed to sit in the House?

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): They have the right of sitting in the Federal Houses in Australia but do not avail themselves of it.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Yes, but does my right hon. friend not object to that?

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Certainly not.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Certainly not! Therefore they might take it as a necessary consequence of giving women votes that they would sit in this House. Why was the *grille* kept in front of the Ladies' Gallery? They were told it was because the sight of so much beauty would so disturb the minds of hon. Members that they would not be able any longer to continue their deliberations quietly. But if ladies were transferred from the gallery to the Treasury Bench and mixed hugger-mugger with hon. Members, it would be difficult to say what might happen. Personally he was an old man, and the transference would not affect him very much. He was speaking more out of sympathy with the young men in the House, and he would not conscientiously submit them to such a temptation. Talk about "lobbying"! If his hon. friend the Member for West Southwark had a beautiful lady on each side of him urging him to vote in a particular way on a private Bill, he believed that his hon. friend would succumb. So far as he could prevent it there would be no such risk. The hon. Member for Kilmarnock said that women canvassed for him, or, rather, what he said was that he canvassed women.

COLONEL DENNY: No I did not.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Well, there was another danger. Candidates would have to canvass women if they had votes. He saw an account the other day of a case in the North of England where a gentleman was found to be visiting a lady who was not his wife. But what was his reply? His defence was that he visited the lady because he contemplated becoming a town councillor, and that he went to see the lady in order to canvass for her support. Curiously enough that plea was not accepted, and the unfortunate man was condemned to pay damages.

COLONEL DENNY: He was acquitted.

MR. LABOUCHERE said that that was worse. He did not know how domestic bliss was to be continued if a man was perpetually leaving his own wife and visiting another man's wife on the plea that he wanted to be a town councillor. He thought that the hon. and gallant Gentleman would agree with him that that would be a very dangerous state of things. The fact was that though a small number of women wanted the franchise the vast majority of them did not. If women had really wanted it, with all the influence they possessed, they would have got it long before this time. Women were perfectly satisfied with the indirect influence they already exercised. It had been said by a great poet that "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." That was perfectly true, and the vast majority of women were perfectly happy in their homes, and had no wish to mix in the turmoil and rough work of elections. They preferred to be what they were; and it was as a champion of these women that he now appeared in this House. The hon. and gallant Gentleman said that they who were against giving votes to women talked about petticoat government.

COLONEL DENNY: That was from the hon. Gentleman's own speech.

MR. LABOUCHERE said that there was a good deal of petticoat government at the present moment. He remembered reading a speech of the right hon. Member for Croydon, who complained that there was a great deal too much of petticoat government in the War Office. That showed that it was not necessary for women to have votes in order to have petticoat government. There were many qualities which women had, and which men had not; but these qualities were not precisely those which fitted them to give votes, or to have a voice in this House. The fact was, women were too impulsive, they had too much heart, and were too good for political life. When an intelligent woman had got an idea into her head, it could not be knocked out of it. One might prove to her conclusively that she was all in the wrong, but she would simply repeat what she had said to commence with. It was said that perhaps women would develop if they had the franchise. According to Darwin they had all developed from worms, or monkeys, or other lower animals. How long did the hon. Gentleman opposite suppose that it had taken him to develop from a worm? Millions of years! And were they to give women votes in the hope that in some millions of years they would develop into intelligent voters and proper Members of Parliament? There were women's clubs in London, but he understood that they invariably failed, and were broken up. The members took different views; and they could not have a practical legislative Assembly like this run on the lines of a woman's club. His own belief was that, if they gave women votes, and particularly if they allowed them to sit in this House, the domestic peace of many households in the country would be destroyed. The Radical husband and the Conservative wife would be found standing against each other for the same constituency. The hon. Member opposite had said that women canvassed for him at Northampton. That was not true. He would never have a woman canvass for him, for in such work a woman did more harm than good. He thought that one of the worst things ever done for the Conservative Party, to which he did not belong, was the establishment of the Primrose League, and therefore he hoped that that Party would always support it. Ladies seemed to think that he was their special enemy; they did not believe that he was a friend of women. What happened at Northampton was that a number of women who were members of the Women's Franchise Association came down to that city, took committee rooms, and issued placards inviting his constituents not to vote for him, and they went about canvassing against him. At the meeting of the electors at Northampton he asked the men how they would like their "missises" to go about like these women, leaving their husbands at home to feed and wash the baby, and the invariable answer was "No, we won't." The result was that these women were received everywhere with cries of, "Go home and look after the baby," and they soon indignantly retired from the field. The mission of a working man's wife was to look after the home, to mind the baby, to cook the dinner, and to do the household washing. She had no time for electioneering. The business of the husband was to take an hour off, go to public meetings, and if he were a wise man adopt the Radical principles addressed to him.

His contention was that the vast majority of women did not want the franchise, and that men did not want them to have it. What happened was that at public meetings, some one got up and said, "Let us pass a resolution in favour of women." There was a certain amount of gallantry in that, and it pleased the ladies; and so the meeting passed the resolution. But they did so knowing full well that it never would be carried in this House. Working men particularly were entirely opposed to women having the vote. He went further, and insisted that those who voted in favour of the Resolution in this House were themselves opposed to it. [Cries of "No."] Yes, yes. Everybody knew what happened when this Resolution was to come on. Members were pestered by women in the lobbies, and asked to fulfil their pledge, and vote for the Resolution; but two-thirds of those who would vote in favour of it would infinitely prefer it to be talked out. [AN HON. MEMBER: No.] His hon. friend said no, but he was not everybody. What happened in the case of the Plumbers Bill which stood in front of the Women's Franchise Resolution? Everybody at once displayed a deep interest in the Plumbers Bill, and took part in long discussions upon it. Then on another occasion his friend Mr. Hazell, then Member for Leicester, got his Verminous Persons Bill through its First and Second Reading, and through Committee, and it came on for a Third Reading; but it stood in the way of the women's franchise Resolution. Well, hon. Members discussed the Verminous Persons Bill at inordinate length. Someone asked, suppose he had a fox in his pocket, was he to be regarded as a verminous person? Then there were questions asked as to whether the bath was to be warm or cold, or of what temperature. Everybody knew that these discussions on the verminous question were a mere blind to talk out the Bill to prevent the other question of the women's franchise coming on. Was it not a positive fact that that sort of thing would not be allowed unless the sense of the House was in favour of putting off the question in that indirect way. There was a Bill down on the Paper that night about Barnet Waterworks. It was a Private Bill. He had studied it, and there were many interesting questions connected with it. He proposed to treat the Bill exhaustively. He was perfectly indifferent as to whether Barnet got that Bill or not, and if it had come on he would probably have taken the side of the minority. But, in some unfortunate moment the Gentlemen connected with the Bill put it off to next week, and so they had not an opportunity of discussing it. To return to the women's franchise, women did not want it, men did not want it, and many would vote for it because they were obliged to. [Cries of "Oh, oh!"] Well, there were some who would vote for it who were fanatics on this matter; but hon. Members were not all fanatics. He stood to his views. So long as he had the honour to be a Member of this House he should defend the cause of women. He did not go for these political Boadiceas. He went for the angel of the hearth, who kept away from political turmoil; and in that view he believed he was supported by the vast majority of men and women of commonsense in the country.

*SIR JOHN ROLLESTON (Leicester) said that while admitting the difficulties which might surround so sweeping a change as was sought for in the Resolution before the House, yet, if the ideal was right the difficulties ought not to be a bar to its realisation. They were led to believe that women already played an important part in the government of the country; that they had ready access to the War Office and perhaps other great Departments, and that they exercised a considerable influence in the appointment of those who were selected for the service of the State. If, therefore, such great consideration was given to the sagacity and acumen and experience of women of one class, he certainly thought that the simple vote for a candidate for this House, Membership of which was not one of the lucrative appointments of the State, might be extended to women of another class who naturally wished to have a voice in the appointment of those who were to represent them. He had the honour to present a petition in favour of this Resolution that afternoon from some thousands of women workers at Leicester and Hinckley, and yesterday deputations attended at the House from Bolton, Wigan, Cradley Heath, Leicester, Hinckley, and other places. Their purpose was to interview the hon. Member who was to introduce this Resolution and other Members interested in their cause; and they clearly and forcibly made out their case. Afterwards the hon. Member for the Loughborough Division and himself had a most interesting and instructive tea-party in the precincts of the House with the members of these deputations. One of their guests, with some reluctance he admitted, told them that she had worked ten hours a day at welding chains and received at the end of the week 5s. for that work. But it was fair to say that she also said that that was not the maximum wage paid to women workers in that trade, as some obtained as much as 10s. a week. Now what these women workers said was that men who had the franchise had a weapon, and could get their wants attended to, and that until they also got this weapon, the women of this country would doubtless have to continue to work under harsh conditions for starvation wages without being able to make their wants felt. That was briefly the effect of what the deputations said, and which he was glad of the opportunity of repeating these at first hand, and of urging upon the House with all the force at his command the acceptance of their plea. He most heartily supported the Resolution.

DR. SHIPMAN (Northampton) said he was compelled to speak because his colleague in the representation of Northampton did not fully represent that constituency on this great question. Of course it was well known to all in Northampton that his hon. colleague was idolised by the ladies; and if he was opposed by the ladies who came down from London at the election in 1895 he could assure him that ladies both spoke and worked for him in 1900. At the last election a beautiful young lady went to his colleague and began to argue with him on the question of the woman franchise. But the hon. Gentleman exhibited the wonderful and peculiar influence he had over women by cutting in and saying, "Do you believe in love?" At anyrate, he so got her thoughts away from the franchise that she told him she hoped some day to marry a baronet. The people of Northampton thought very strongly on this question, and they had an association which worked for it. He would strongly support the Resolution. Women held property in this country and they had interests as vital and as keen in the community as men had. They had been twitted with not being able to bear arms against the enemies of their country; but they had borne in their own arms those who became able to defend it. He did not forget that the strength of the country depended as much and more on its motherhood than on anything else. What had been the tendency of the law? It was to disentangle the personality of the wife from that of her husband. At one time a married couple were legally only one person. It had taken some years to disentangle the personality of the wife in regard to property, but women now held property practically in the same way as men; and if women bore the burden of the responsibility of property why should they not also have the right to join in guiding taxation? Then, again, women worked alongside men industrially and socially. Would anyone who knew the business capacity of women twit them with want of intelligence? He failed to see any reason, physically, morally, or mentally, why women should play an inferior part to that of men. It used to be thought that women were inferior; but when the Universities were thrown open to women they found that women were able to beat men in their own field of mathematics. It was because women had not the opportunity that they did not stand as high as men years ago. As to courage, he remembered reading not long ago a case in which a landlady heard suspicious sounds downstairs. A burglar was in the house; there were men lodgers there and the landlady was the only woman. She lighted a candle and went down and struggled with the burglar, the men above merely asking what was the matter, but they did not come down. Not only in those directions but even in strength woman could show not a superiority, of course, but an equality with man. In every way they looked at this question, free from the old semi-barbarous prejudice against women, he could not see any difference between men and women so far as regarded capacity to give light and guidance as to the government of the country. Women were asked to advise with reference to children and other matters in which they were concerned, and were of assistance in municipal and local elections. He was surprised to hear his hon. colleague talk about the turmoil of political elections. His hon. friend knew nothing of that. During the last election he spent most of his time reading a novel by James Payn entitled "By Proxy." He had now secured that volume and his hon. friend had inscribed it as follows:—"Read during the election." It was only necessary to mention the name of Labouchere in Northampton and there was no need to trouble further. It was only on this particular question that he and his hon. friend did not see eye to eye; and he was sorry that his hon. friend was behind his humble self. He was, however, cheered by the remark of his hon. friend when he said that if two colleagues saw eye to eye one of them must be a fool. There was no doubt that if Northampton was polled on this particular question, it would say, as Northampton's greatest Member, Charles Bradlaugh, said, that they required the intelligence of women to help them to properly govern a country which consisted of women as well as of men.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) said he had listened with great pleasure to the amusing speech delivered by his hon. friend, but he could not help thinking that the subject was worthy of a little more serious consideration than that which he had bestowed upon it. They had heard from his hon. friend the Member for Northampton a *rechauffé* of some of the old familiar arguments with which this question had been approached. They had heard persiflage and badinage rather than argument. His hon. friend said that inasmuch as women were more numerous than men the result would be that the destinies of this Empire would pass to the control of women. That was, of course, a fallacy, because it assumed that there was no community of interest between men and women. Those who advocated women's suffrage rightly or wrongly took the view that there was no separate attitude of mind with regard to political questions inherent in women as distinguished from men, and, therefore, on all questions of Imperial or domestic policy they would find men and women showing as much divergence of opinion as was now shown among men. He could not regard that as a serious argument towards the solution of the question. His hon. friend advanced a very plausible argument when he said that if the franchise were conceded to women they would be obliged to go a step further and allow women to sit in this House. He was not prepared to go the length of his right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean and give an off-hand assent to the suggestion that women should be permitted to sit in this House. But there were many other functions which, intellectually, they might be capable of performing, while there were other duties for which they were not physically constituted, such as active military service and so on, and which it was inexpedient they should attempt to perform. While conceding the franchise to women it did not at all follow that the right to sit in this House should also be conceded.

There was another argument which was very formidable, and which he confessed he felt some difficulty in answering. It was said that women did not want the franchise. He was speaking in the presence of men, many of whom were older than himself, but he doubted whether that same argument was not used with almost equal force when it was proposed to enfranchise the working-classes. It was repeatedly stated that the working-classes did not want the franchise; and undoubtedly if it had not been for the advocacy of a great political Party in favour of the extension of the franchise it was very questionable whether the working-classes themselves would have advocated it in a sufficiently intense degree to ensure success. The case of women was different, because they had no facilities and no organisation which would enable them to agitate in the same way as men. However, the great majority of the thoughtful women in this country were in favour of the extension of the franchise to their sex. There were some very remarkable exceptions; but he was satisfied that intellectual women on the whole were in favour of the movement. Then his hon. friend said that women were intellectually inferior to men. He did not know on what ground that assertion was based. It was perfectly true that women as a rule did not manifest ability in the region of art, literature, or politics in the same degree as men did; but at the same time it should be recognised that the opportunities of women were singularly limited. They had not the same opportunities for education as men, and undoubtedly they were more the creatures of emotional impulse than men; but at the same time he thought that very few would say that women were incapable of exercising the franchise with as much ability and with as much advantage to the State as the average man. If the average working-class man were compared with the average working-class woman he ventured to say that there was no such intellectual distinction between them as would form the basis of a case for the refusal of franchise to women.

The final argument of his hon. friend was that if the franchise were extended to women it would break up domestic bliss. There are a great many concomitants in domestic bliss, and an addicional one would not be a serious matter. There was no difference of opinion between husband and wife as to religion or the education of their children or other matters which entered largely into domestic life; and he had never heard of a case in which a woman came into collision with her husband owing to a difference in political opinion. He thought they would be quite prepared to agree or to agree to differ as to whether they would vote Liberal or Tory, if they could not convince each other. He agreed that, speaking generally, women had not attained the high intellectual standard which men had attained, but to anyone interested in the welfare of the country one of the most distressing aspects of the present situation was the indifference which women displayed to politics. That was due to the fact that they had no power; but given power, responsibility would follow, and with responsibility a sense of responsibility. His chief argument in favour of the franchise, which he would press very strongly, was that it would have a great educative effect. Over and beyond that they had to solve so many complex problems, such as the education of the people, the improvement of the social condition of the people, and many other aspects of domestic life, that it was desirable that women should enter a domain hitherto closed against them. He had no doubt that if women were allowed to have a voice in the selection of the Legislature, great progress would be made with the reasonable solution of many of the problems with which the country was confronted. A quickening influence would be given to the Legislature; and he had very little doubt that in regard to such questions as temperance, sanitation, and social reform, the extension of the franchise to women would be conducive to the best interests of the country.

*Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said that the appearance of the

House did not indicate that there was any strong feeling on the part of Members on this subject. Otherwise the Benches, instead of being practically empty, would have been crowded. It was about eighteen years ago since he listened to the first debate on this question; he had listened to every debate on the subject since; and he had heard the same kind of arguments used again and again. Not one new argument had been adduced to-night. His hon. friend the Member for Northampton had been twitted with using stale arguments in opposition to the Motion; but he might fairly retort that no new arguments had been brought forward in favour of it. He himself felt very strongly that if it were possible to take a vote by ballot on this subject, not more than fifty Members would be found in favour of it. It was the extreme pressure and the art of cajolery which women exercised at election times which induced Members to record their votes in favour of a proposal whether they sincerely desired to see it carried or not. Many hon. Members would vote for the Resolution because they were under the impression that it would never become law, but they were playing a very dangerous game, as some day or other it might be carried as a result of their indifference. A strong feeling was said to exist among the factory lasses of Lancashire in favour of the Bill, and he was not surprised, seeing that, according to the story just told to the House by the Member for Leicester, they were looking forward to an increase of wages and shorter hours, should the change in the law ever be brought about which the women were advocating. He was an old trades unionist, and he had heard various arguments adduced amongst trades unionists and working men as to the best method of getting their wages raised and their hours reduced, but he had never heard it adduced that by getting the Parliamentary suffrage their wages would be increased and their hours reduced. Yet this was the kind of argument employed to get up the steam of the lasses in Lancashire. Whoever put such an idea into the heads of these poor misguided women had incurred a grave responsibility. What was the Motion they were asked to vote in favour of? It was very adroitly phrased, and it was framed in such a manner as to get the votes of Members without committing them to any clear and distinct issue. He declined to fall into the trap, because it was clear to him from having read very carefully and watched closely the efforts made by many of the ladies who advocated the extension of the suffrage to the women of this country that the one great burning ambition on their part was to get into this House. [Hear! Hear!] It was, he admitted, impossible to do so, but, if they could by any possible means make it clear to the women who were in the forefront of the movement that under no circumstances whatever would they be allowed to enter that House as Members of it, the movement in favour of female suffrage would speedily collapse. This was the experience he had gleaned from a pretty intimate acquaintance with these ladies, some of them personal acquaintances. Some of them, he was satisfied, were perfectly honest in the opinion they entertained on the subject; but the majority of them, he believed, were animated by other considerations. He was not going to stop to inquire as to whether the conferring upon women the right to vote for Members of Parliament would affect the opposite or his side of the House. They ought to discuss the question quite separate from Party politics, but his own impression was that both Parties would have cause to regret the change. But it was an insoluble problem, and he did not intend to argue the question from this point of view. It was a very serious matter to once open the door, because, if they did once open the Parliamentary door, and let in however small a section of women, it would be practically impossible to ever again close it until the whole female adult population of the country was enfranchised. He therefore asked the House to pause and seriously consider for a moment where this was likely to lead. According to the census of 1901, he found there were something like nearly 800,000 more female than male adults in the United Kingdom. He believed that there were very few people who doubted that before many years they would have manhood suffrage, and this, supposing the Motion was carried, would necessarily imply that the whole male and female population would be enfranchised. They would then have 800,000 more female than male voters. Talk about the swamping process, which used to be urged against extending the suffrage to working men! He merely pointed to this as evidence that if they enfranchised every man and woman—which was the logical outcome of the efforts made for a series of years past—they would have the male population of the country swamped entirely; they would have 800,000 more female than male voters in the United Kingdom. They all knew how liable women were to be influenced by their spiritual pastors and masters. The parsons or the priests might be excellent men to guide them spiritually and to point to them the way to Heaven; but, in his experience, and he thought in the experience of most politicians, they were very bad guides to the polling booth. If they had 800,000 more women than male voters, however, they would practically hand over the government of the country to women and priests. ["No, no."] Well, this was his belief, and he believed the state of chaos in the Established Church was largely owing to the influence of women. He believed their spiritual guides had inoculated them with the priestly spirit and practices which prevailed in the Establishment. Hon. Members might smile, but this was his honest conviction, and he was not prepared even to open the Parliamentary door for the admission of women. He had not the slightest doubt that a majority of votes would be recorded in favour of the Motion, but this did not affect him in the slightest degree. He was simply urging that which he believed to be right; and, if nearly every Member went into the Lobby in favour of the Motion, he should feel just as strongly, and go into the opposite Lobby. But there was one point he thought they ought to keep seriously in view. The right to vote would give women the right to sit in that House. ["Hear, hear!" and "No, no!"] This the women knew perfectly well. If they had votes they would use them so effectively that Parliamentary candidates would find it impossible to resist the next demand for admitting women to seats in the House. They were proceeding cautiously, cunningly, and stealthily in the course they had marked out for themselves, and he believed there was no safe halting place except to keep them where they were. The hon. Member for Northampton quoted those beautiful words, "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world," but these women were not content with making good men. How many of them owed what they were to their mothers! He proudly acknowledged that whatever he was and had were due to the devotion of a noble mother; and if women were to devote themselves to rearing good, sterling citizens and honourable men it would be far more creditable to them than to be seeking to possess themselves of the franchise, and to get into the House of Commons.

This question of the right to vote giving the right to gain admission to the House was to his mind the most important to be considered before the House recorded itself in favour of the Motion. Why were they asked to make this change? What were the grievances under which women laboured? They had all sorts and conditions of men represented in the House; almost every shade of opinion was to be found there, and, differing as he did with the majority of Members in his political views, he yet believed that there were no real grievances which could be brought to the notice of the House that the House would not remedy. What grievances had women which they had brought to the notice of the House and which it had failed to redress? He did not know of one. He hoped those who followed him would give them a proof that this power was sought by the women for accomplishing, not some sentimental object, but because they had a real grievance which the House had refused to redress. They were, however, told that if women possessed the right to vote and assisted in the legislation of the House it would infuse into their legislation a humanitarian spirit. This was one of the reasons urged by those who advocated this claim. Some of them, however, had noted the remarkable headgear of women, to adorn which millions of birds had been destroyed, and although it had been pointed out to them that by this practice the most beautiful of the feathered tribe were disappearing, they still continued to wear feathers in their hats. Women had also been told over and over again by some nobler members of their own sex of the horrible sufferings undergone by the poor little seals, through their mothers being captured while in search of food for their offspring, yet nearly every woman who could afford to do so went on wearing seal-skin jackets. And these were the people they were asked to admit to the franchise because they would infuse into their legislation a spirit of humanitarianism. Then let them go to the courts of law and ask the officials there who, whenever there was a sensational trial, when there was anything in the shape of spicy evidence, besieged that court. These things were forced upon them by men and women who urged that the suffrage should be extended to women because of the high morality that would be imported into their legislation. The people who made the most desperate efforts to get into our courts of law were nearly in every instance women. ["No, no!"] If any Member doubted it, let him make inquiries of the officials of the courts. Our newspapers from time to time had teemed with reports of the desperate efforts made by women to get into courts of law during periods to which he had referred. He had another objection, and it was that women were already creatures of privilege. They were privileged all along the line. How many Members had been in an omnibus when it had been raining, and the conductor had appealed to them to get out and let a lady get in? Had any one ever heard a conductor ask one man to get out and let another man in? Nothing of the kind. Men stepped off the kerb into the gutter to allow a lady to pass clean shod. Whatever view they took of the matter no one could deny that ladies, because they were ladies, were creatures of privilege.

There were other considerations which weighed strongly with him. He admitted it was very difficult in a question of such a delicate character to discuss it publicly, especially in the presence of ladies, but there were questions of a physiological character. Women unfortunately suffered from infirmities from which men were altogether exempt. He knew Members might complain, but who had forced them to argue the question from this delicate point of view? ["Nobody."] The Member who said that might take such a view of the matter, but he did not. He had said there were physiological considerations which weighed very strongly with him and which made it very difficult for women frequently to exercise their mental faculties and their judgment as clearly as they did at other periods of their lives. There were also sentimental and sexual considerations which unconciously led men and women to form judgments of a very different nature and character to that which men formed in discussing questions between themselves as men. It was no use disguising the fact. Men and women could not discuss a question without sentiment and sexual considerations coming in to influence them in their judgment, and this was an additional reason why he opposed the Motion. He knew some hon. Members did not like to hear what he considered to be home truths upon this subject, but they were forced into arguing the question from what he considered to be the philosophical and rational point of view. Nature had settled the question for him, and he did not want to fly in the face of Nature. Nature had made two sexes. One sex up to the present time had fairly well, with all its faults, managed to govern the world, and it would be a very hazardous experiment to admit upon an equal footing the other sex, which had not yet proved its capability for governing the world. He apologised for occupying the time of the House so long. He objected to the change first of all on physiological grounds; secondly, for political reasons; thirdly, for moral considerations; and fourthly, and what was perhaps as important, if not more important, than all, on religious grounds.

Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in supporting the Motion, said the arguments which had been advanced against it that evening were at least fifty years old and they absolutely contradicted each other.

It was said that only a minority of women desired the change; well, did it stand to reason that a minority of women would be able to cajole a majority of men in that House? Much had been made of the "thin end of the wedge" argument, the contention being that if the franchise were given to one section it would have to be given to all women, who would then be in a majority and be able to elect the majority of Members of this House. But the fact was that the majority of women do not care to enter public life, and, that being so, why was it necessary to keep out those who were eminently fitted to perform, at any rate, some of the functions of public life? Many of the greatest monarchs known to history had been women. That was not an argument for saying that all monarchs should be women, but it was an argument against excluding women from being monarchs, and the same argument might be used—although he was not at present pressing the view—in favour of women becoming Members of Parliament. He did not believe that if women had the franchise it would cause any sudden revolution, but he did believe that in the course of time the effect would be considerable and entirely beneficial. The sphere of women's work had been considerably curtailed within recent years. Formerly they were able to sit on the vestries; they were unable to sit on the borough councils. Until this year they had been members of School Boards; they were ineligible for the county councils by which the School Boards had been supplanted. Neither of those changes could have taken place if women had been possessed of votes. The supporters of the Resolution had been challenged to bring forward a single instance in which women had been treated unfairly and in which the possession of votes would have made any difference. In 1897, without the slightest warning, the commencing salary of women clerks in the Savings Banks Department of the Post Office was reduced from £65, with annual increments of £3, to £55, with annual increments of £2 10s., and at the same time the examinations were made more difficult. For the class of women required for these appointments £55 per annum was not a living wage. No such reduction had been made with regard to any class of men in the public service, and he did not believe it would have been possible in regard to women if women had had votes. Moreover, the possession of the suffrage would go far towards stopping the sweating to which women were subjected. In many cases women had more or less to compete with men, and they were often treated very unfairly as compared with men. The House would be startled if they had an opportunity of studying a comparative table of the wages paid to men and women in the cotton mills of Lancashire. He granted that these matters could not be settled by the State, but there was an increasing tendency to settle trade disputes politically, and if that tendency was to go on it was grossly unfair that women should not have votes. Women's wages had not advanced nearly so much as men's, and he believed if they had votes they would in the long run be able to get fairer treatment than they at present received. The extension of the franchise to women would tend in the direction of that national efficiency which all desired; it would enable women to improve their lot; it would open the door of public life to those who were eminently fitted to take their part therein; and it would give the poor a better chance. He believed it would raise the standard of life amongst women, and thereby promote the physical and moral wellbeing of the whole community. He therefore warmly supported the Resolution.

Mr. BOND (Nottingham, E.) said it could not be denied that if the Resolution were carried and practical effect given to it it would constitute a grave and serious departure such as no European country had yet ventured upon. It was true that in some of the Colonies experiments of the kind had been tried without very serious effects, but the conditions of European life were so different that he did not attach much importance to that fact. Before so hazardous a course was ventured upon very sound and cogent arguments ought to be advanced in its favour. In essence there were two reasons which might lead to the adoption of such a policy. One was that there was so powerful and overwhelming a demand from an important section of the community for the granting of the franchise to women, that resistance thereto would cause such discomposure of social relations and disturbance of social life that it would be better to run the risks involved in acceding to the demand. Could it be said that any such demand existed at present? The exact contrary was the case. There was a small section which ardently and vehemently desired the change; there was a large mass of absolutely indifferent opinion; and there was a considerable body of opinion altogether hostile to the proposal. Never in this or any other country had it been proposed to force the franchise upon a class of people, a large section of whom were absolutely opposed to the idea. When the question was prominently before the public about fifteen years ago, a large number of the most intellectual and distinguished women of the day banded themselves together in a protest against the idea of the franchise being conferred upon their sex, and the House ought seriously to consider the matter before they lightly took a step which many of the most distinguished of those whom it was proposed to enfranchise had declared would be bad, not only for the country, but for their sex, and for the cause they represented. The only other reason which might justify the adoption of so hazardous a course was that some manifest and distinct benefit would be thereby conferred upon the nation, and that our social and political constitution would be appreciably improved. The arguments adduced by the supporters of the Resolution had not carried conviction to his mind on that point. It could not be to the general benefit that a large class of people, of whom the bulk were professedly indifferent and a large class absolutely hostile, should have the franchise conferred upon them. Women, much more than men, were swayed by the affections, the emotions, and the imagination, and in the absence of any such demand as that to which he had referred the House would be acting unwisely in adopting the proposal now before it.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) thought it was necessary that at least one Irishman should rise to dissociate himself and his countrymen generally from the unchivalrous, uncalled for, and unprecedented attack made upon women by the hon. Member for Haggerston.

MR. CREMER, rising to a point of order, asked whether, in the opinion of Mr. Speaker, he had made any attack whatever on women. He repudiated altogether the interpretation placed upon his words by the hon. Member for East Clare.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is not a point of order; it is a matter for the House to judge.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he would not prove the charge by referring in detail to the hon. Member's observations, but he would remind the House of one or two points to show that he was justified in the language he had used. The whole drift of the hon. Member's argument was that women were by instinct, nature, and everything else, unfitted to exercise the rights of citizenship, and that they ought not for a moment to be placed upon terms of anything like equality with men. The hon. Member had talked about the cruelty practised upon birds and seals in order that women might be adorned. But the hon. Member was silent as to pigeon-shooting and other so-called sports which were indulged in by persons who certainly were not women. He also repudiated the argument of the right hon. Member in associating the great body of the womanhood of the kingdom with those women, lost to shame, who crowded the Courts to listen to unsavoury cases. If there was no English hon. Member prepared to resent that general description of the fair sex, he felt sure he would be giving voice to the opinion of the majority of the entire Irish representatives in the House when he said that he most emphatically protested against the attack which had been made upon the noble character of womanhood, which certainly was appreciated in Ireland The hon. Member for Haggerston was almost the last person one would have expected to object to the extension of the powers and the rights of women. There was nobody in this House who was not aware of the efforts that had been continuously made by the hon. Member for Haggerston in the cause of international peace and goodwill throughout the world, and was it not admitted that, whatever effect the extension of the franchise to women might have, it would most certainlyincrease immensely the influences at work for the maintenance of peace throughout the world? Therefore he should have imagined that the hon. Member for Haggerston would have been glad of the assistance which a reform of this kind would have given to a movement with which he had been so conspicuously identified. He maintained that no real case had been made out against the Motion of the hon. Baronet the Member for Leicestershire.

They had had an amusing speech from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton, which, as far as it was serious, had been neutralised by the speech of the other Member for Northampton, who gave the House a totally different account of what was taking place in that Radical stronghold. The senior Member for Northampton ridiculed the idea of ladies canvassing at election time, and poured scorn upon it, but from what had been said he gathered that the senior Member for Northampton did not have sufficient canvassers to promote his interest. However much amusement had been caused, the case of the hon. Member for Leicestershire had not been seriously met. The hon. Member for Haggerston said that no fresh argument had been introduced in favour of the extension of the franchise to women. There was, however, to-day an argument which was not in existence when the last debate on this question took place, and it was that they had, in one of the greatest and most freely governed and enlightened portions of this Empire, an example where the experiment of extending the franchise to women had been tried with the very best possible result—he referred to the Commonwealth of Australia. Elections had recently been held in the Commonwealth of Australia. Women had voted there, with the result not only that men of good standing and character had been returned, but the cause of labour had been everywhere supported. This was not a question of what Party women might belong to; apart from any such considerations, women had the right to vote. What right had they to brand women as social inferiors or slaves? They would shudder at the idea of treating women as slaves. Slavery consisted in denying to any human being a legitimate voice in the control of the country where he lived, and that was what women were denied. By what right did they do that? Was it not an intolerable assumption to pretend that men were so much better than women? Hon. Gentlemen objected to the idea of women coming into this House, but, if so, why did they allow them to exercise the franchise in every part of the country in regard to local government. As far as Ireland was concerned, he knew of many women district councillors who gave great assistance to the neighbourhood in which they resided, and who were trusted and looked up to. Why were women denied the right of exercising the franchise? What they ought to seek in government was to get for the service of the State the best people they could. They wanted access to the best brains of the country, and nobody would deny that there were plenty of ladies in every walk of life who would fulfil their duties with at least as great credit as many hon. Members of this House. He was not going to mention names or draw distinctions, but, as there had been a certain amount of light humour imported into the debate, he would point out that if the Government had had in their service two or three ladies, suitable in every way to exercise the function of Whips, the incident of yesterday, so humiliating to the Government, would not have occurred, although he cast not the slightest reflection on the specimens of the male sex occupying that office, who no doubt did their very best.

He had risen for the purpose of saying that at least there was one man in the House who resented the tone and temper which had been introduced into this debate in certain quarters and he hoped that the division would show that there was a considerable majority in the House which was not prepared to treat lightly the benefits resulting from the enfranchisement of women in Australia and other self-governing communities. He hoped they would have sufficient chivalry displayed on all sides to convince people outside that it was no spirit of prejudice or bigotry which prevented hon. Gentlemen from enabling women in this country and in Ireland to exercise the ordinary right of the franchise. It was perfectly absurd when all of them owed so much to women to treat them in this way. There was not a single Member in the House who either in his childhood or his manhood could not look back to some period of his life when his kindest friend, guide, and helper was a woman. Upon the broad principle of human freedom he contended that every one of God's human beings who was endowed with intelligence from Heaven, whether they were men or women, was entitled to have a voice and vote in the affairs of the country in which they were interested and in which they lived. At every period of the history of the world it had been the pride of poets and writers to sing the praises of womankind, and now, at the commencement of a new century, they were treating them as slaves. He did not know what the experience of hon. Gentlemen was who were opposing this Motion, but he ventured to say that if this question could be settled by ballot, and every Englishman, Scotchman, Irishman, and Welshman were left perfectly free from any outside influence to say whether they considered it right or just that women should be treated as slaves, they would register a vote against it.

MR. CREAN (Cork County, S.E.) said that ungallant as it might seem, he rose as an Irishman to assure the House that in this matter the hon. Member for East Clare did not speak for the whole of the Irish Party. He yielded to no man in his admiration for the fair sex, for he knew them well and knew their views, and he knew the influence they exercised over the male sex. He did not believe, however, that women were demanding this right, and if a ballot could be taken of all the women in the country, he felt sure they would be found to be dead against this proposal.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 182; Noes, 68. (Division List No. 58.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Aird, Sir John
Allen, Charles P.
Arrol, Sir William
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth, R. (Christch.
Bell, Richard
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bigwood, James
Boland, John
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Brigg, John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Causton, Richard Knight
Cautley, Henry Strother
Channing, Francis Allston
Chapman, Edward
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Ellice, Capt. E C (S. Andr'ws Bghs
Ellis, John Edward)Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Fyler, John Arthur
Gore, Hn. G. R. C. Ormsby (Salop
Gorst, Rt. Hon Sir John Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert

Grant, Corrie
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Groves, James Grimble
Hain, Edward
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hammond, John
Harris,F. Leverton(Tynem'uth
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Helder, Augustus
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West
Horniman, Frederick John
Hoult, Joseph
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Keswick, William
Langley, Batty
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese,Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
Markham, Arthur Basil
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell,W.J.H (Dumfriesshire
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mooney, John J.
Morgan,David J.(Walthamstow
Morley,Rt.Hon.John(Montrose
Morrell, George Herbert
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan,Col. John P.(Galway, N.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shee, James John
Parrott, William
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Price, Robert John
Rankin, Sir James
Rea, Russell
Redmond, William (Clare)
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rigg, Richard
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rose, Charles Day
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Saunderson,Rt.Hn.Col. Edw.J.
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford,East)
Smith,H.C(North'mb.Tyneside
Soares, Ernest J.
Spear, John Ward
Stevenson, Francis S
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas,David Alfred(Merthyr)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Tuff, Charles
Walrond,Rt.Hn.Sir William H.
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Webb, Colonel William George
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whiteley,H. (Ashton und.Lyne
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Woodhouse,SirJ T.(Huddersf'd
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Charles M'Laren and Colonel Denny.

NOES.

Acland-Hood,Capt.Sir Alex. F.
Allsopp, Hon. George
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bignold, Arthur
Black, Alexander William
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boulnois, Edmund
Brassey, Albert
Caldwell, James.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Clancy, John Joseph
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E
Craig,Charles Curtis(Antrim,S.
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Cust, Henry John C.
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dorington,Rt.Hon. Sir John E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.SirJ.(Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Gretton, John
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.Sir John H.
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long,Rt.Hn. Walter(Bristol,S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas,Reginald J.(Portsmouth)
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
Maxwell,RtHnSir H.E.(Wigt'n
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morpeth, Viscount
Murnaghan, George
O'Connor, James(Wicklow,W.)
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E.(Waterford)
Roche, John
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Stanley,Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stock, James Henry
Talbot,Rt.HnJ.G.(Oxf'dUniv.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Welby, Sir CharlesG.E.(Notts.)
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn.E.R.(Bath)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Labouchere and Sir Lees Knowles.

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 17*th March*, 1904.

SAT FIRST.

The Lord Alington—Sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Victoria University of Yorkshire Bill [H.L.]. The Lord Balfour informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The order made on the 4th instant discharged, and Bill committed.

Tynemouth Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Tynemouth Gas Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

PETITIONS.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES (METRIC SYSTEM) BILL [H. L.].

Petition in favour of; of Corporation of Crewe; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).

No. 603. Germany (Technical schools for special branches of the metal industries).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND).

Return of the areas, population, and valuation of counties, burghs, and parishes in Scotland.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP.

Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Commander H. P. Smith, one of His Majesty's Superintending Inspectors of Factories, upon the conditions of work in flax and linen mills as affecting the health of the operatives employed therein. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PUBLIC RECORDS.

(Admiralty Departments).—Eleventh Schedule, containing a list and particulars of classes of documents which have been removed from the office of the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and deposited in the Public Record Office, but are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation therein.

(Court of Exchequer).—Schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents which formerly were or ought to have been in the office of First Fruits and Tenths in the late Court of Exchequer, and which are now in the Public Record Office, but are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation therein. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

COLLEGE CHARTER ACT, 1871.

Application received from the Yorkshire College, Leeds, for the establishment of a University in Leeds, referred by His Majesty in Council for the Consideration and Report of a Committee of His Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council; together with a draft of the Charter applied for. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 33.)

THE LATE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Lansdowne): My Lords, I do not think that I shall misinterpret your Lordships' wishes if in a very few words I give expression to the deep regret with which I believe this House has heard of the death of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge. We in this country are fortunate in that we have in our midst a Royal Family, the members of which make it constantly clear to us by their conduct that it is their desire to avail themselves of every opportunity of taking a useful and honourable part in our public life. Their opportunities are not infrequently restricted. It happens often that a Royal Prince, from the mere fact that he is a Royal Prince, finds that the accident of his birth is an obstacle and a hindrance rather than an assistance to him in realising his natural aspirations. In this respect the Duke of Cambridge was exceptionally fortunate. His opportunity came to him, and he turned it most successfully to account. He chose the profession of a soldier, and for fifty-eight years he followed that profession. He held many prominent appointments; he saw service in the field; but the most remarkable feature in his military career is that for almost forty years he filled the high and distinguished office of Commander-in-Chief of the Army. That office has now ceased to exist, but I venture to say that when we refer to it, and look back to it, we shall invariably connect it with the long and honourable tenure of His late Royal Highness.

My Lords, during those forty years, as His Royal Highness pointed out when in 1895 he took leave of the Army, many great and important changes took place. I will not upon this occasion enumerate them, or recapitulate the history of the British Army during the time in which it was under His Royal Highness's command. Two great measures, at any rate, took effect while he held that position—I mean the abolition of purchase and the introduction of short service, changes which have been the bedrock of all subsequent reforms and which, in my opinion, are the bedrock even of those now in progress. But it would be the merest affectation to describe the late Duke of Cambridge as having been a great Army reformer. His best friends would not claim for him that that was his merit, and I do not think that he himself would have put forward any such claim. His bent of mind was eminently conservative. He was content to leave it to others to propose and initiate changes; he regarded it rather as his business to be the watchful guardian of the interests of the Army and to criticise and, if possible, improve any measures which were presented to him for his consideration

My Lords, I think there are two observations which may be made in regard to the conduct of His Royal Highness. In the first place, his criticism was that of a man who knew and understood the Army as probably no other living soldier did. He was able to fortell how any change would be regarded by every one serving the Crown in the military profession, from the general at one end of the Scale to the last-joined recruit at the other. The other observation I will make of him is this, that if His Royal Highness, as undoubtedly was sometimes the case, accepted changes which he would not himself have proposed, or which may, in some instances, have been distasteful to him, he accepted them after they had once been thoroughly discussed with absolute loyalty, and he was glad to put his great knowledge and experience at the service of those whose business it was to carry those great changes into effect. And so it came to pass that the Duke of Cambridge earned the confidence and goodwill of many successive Secretaries of State and many successive generations of British soldiers.

In this House His Royal Highness not infrequently took part in our debates, particularly if the subject under discussion was one concerning the affairs of the Army. His speech was, as one might expect from a soldier, simple, and altogether devoid of studied effect, but he spoke to the point with sincerity, and with thorough knowledge of the subject.

Outside this House the Duke of Cambridge associated himself with all useful and beneficent movements. I suppose no man ever worked harder in that direction than did His late Royal Highness. No charitable enterprise appealed to him for assistance in vain; and if it were one which was in any way connected with the Army, or with the wives and families and dependents of those who were serving in the Army, it commanded a double measure of his goodwill and encouragement. The life which is now ended was a long life, a useful life, and, if popularity and the knowledge that one's efforts are appreciated be a source of happiness, I take leave to say, a happy life also. He has passed away, leaving, I believe, no single enemy in this world, but a host of friends endeared to him by the kindliness and geniality of his disposition; and if he was generally respected, he was certainly not least respected in this House, of which he was for so many years a conspicuous and distinguished Member. I am told that it would not be usual, or in accordance with precedent, that we should move any formal Resolution of condolence with those who are mourning his death; but I do believe that it would be the desire of your Lordships, even in some less formal manner, to signify your deep sympathy with His Majesty the King, and with those who are mourning the loss which has fallen upon the Royal Family and the country.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, my noble friends Lord Spencer and Lord Ripon are away from this House to-day, so it has fallen to me quite unexpectedly to echo the graceful and eloquent words which have fallen from the noble Marquess. If I fail to give expression to what is the feeling of all the Members of your Lordships' House who sit on this side, it will not be from any want of appreciation of His late Royal Highness, but from the fact that I have not had the opportunity of thinking over my remarks. My Lords, I cannot, of course, speak, like the noble Marquess, with full knowledge of the illustrious Duke's services as Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's Army; but this I know—that when he laid down that honourable and distinguished position he laid it down with a recognition of his good service from the whole Army, and commanding the affection and regard of the officers and of all who had been brought into contact with him. I think, too, every one of us has the feeling that with His Royal Highness's death a notable link with the past has been severed. I think I am right in supposing that His Royal Highness was absolutely the last male member of his generation of the House of Hanover to survive. That family has had a great share in the history of this country for the last century and a half, and the death of the last male survivor of its past generation brings home to us very strongly the changes which have taken place. I believe that many instances will occur to the minds of your Lordships of kindness and good fellowship shown by His Royal Highness both as a public man and as a private friend. I think the quality in his character which most came home to me, with my small knowledge of His Royal Highness, was his absolute determination never to give in. It seemed to me that he certainly possessed in a high degree that quality of which we, as a nation, are so proud—that we never know when we are beaten. Only last year, when he took the chair at a dinner in commemoration of the golden wedding of my noble friend Lord Cork, in the speech which he made on that occasion he said that, so long as he could struggle to the fore he would always make his public appearance, and especially when it was to give gratification or do a service to a friend. Those, I think, are high qualities. I think you will agree with me that His Royal Highness well lived up to the traditions of the family to which he belonged, and that we all to-day most sincerely mourn his death and are most anxious to fully express our sorrow for it to His Majesty and the Royal Family.

WILD BIRDS PROTECTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Report of Amendments received.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: I wish to say that I do not propose, at this stage, to move the Amendments standing in my name. I think it would be more convenient that I should bring them forward at a later stage.

Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday next.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to order): Bill reported without Amendment.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): My Lords, this Bill is, *verbatim et literatim* the same as the one which passed through this House with the general approval of your Lordships last session. Therefore, unless some objection is raised to that course, I move that the Standing Committee be negatived.

Moved, That the Standing Committee be negatived.—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to, Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow.

BISHOPRIC OF BRISTOL BILL [H.L.].

Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN GARRISON.

EARL CARRINGTON: My Lords, I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War (1) whether on 1st January, 1904, any regiments in South Africa were still under canvas, and, if so, whether these troops were supplied with bedsteads to keep them off the ground; if so, will he give the names of these regiments; (2) what number of military huts have been supplied for the troops in South Africa; and how many have already been erected.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of DONOUGHMORE): My Lords, I must first express my gratitude to the noble Earl for postponing this Question until to-day, so as to enable the information he requires to be obtained from South Africa. On 1st January this year, there were 9,848 troops, that is to say, non-commissioned officers and men, under canvas in South Africa. The units were: the 3rd and 7th Dragoon Guards, 7th Hussars, R and S Batteries of the Royal Horse Artillery, 83rd and 85th Batteries Royal Field Artillery, the 10th and 13th Brigade Divisions Royal Artillery, the 2nd Royal West Surrey Regiment, the 1st Battalion Welsh Regiment, the 4th Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps, and 2nd, 4th, and 5th Mounted Infantry, and detachments of the Royal Engineers, Army Service Corps, and Army Veterinary Departments at various stations. That is to say, about one-third of the troops then in South Africa were under canvas. I am informed that the majority of these units had

provided themselves with European-pattern tents and marquees; all had beds, field-service or barrack, except a portion of 7th Hussars and the Harrismith units, who had constructed bedsteads of old material. These units have since been supplied with beds. The units at the temporary stations, Kroonstad and Ladybrand, had not bedsteads. The units under canvas had huts or large tents for dining and recreation, wash-houses, etc. As to the number of huts supplied, I am informed that between October, 1901, and April, 1902, 1,094 huts were sent to South Africa, and since then 200 bungalows for married officers have been despatched, Of those huts, about 760 have been erected in the new cantonments, a good deal of new material being used in the process, 186 were used in concentration camps, and thirty, after having been used for temporary purposes, have been sold. This accounts for 976 out of the 1,094 huts sent out. The remainder are standing in temporary hospitals or temporary camps. I may remind your Lordships that barracks are being built as rapidly as possible. We have to build barracks for, I think, some thirty-eight units of different sorts and sizes, and the barracks for all but five will be ready by August. A great many of them are occupied now.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 17*th March*, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing

Order 63 has been complied with, viz. :—Middlesborough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thornaby Tramways Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Corbridge Gas Bill; Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill; South-Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway (Extension of Time) Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

South Shields Gas Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).

Sir ALEXANDER H. BROWN reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past One of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP No. 4).

Mr. RUSSELL REA reported from the Committee on Group No. 4 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at Twelve of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to extend the time for the completion of the authorised pier and works of the Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Company; and for other purposes." [Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [Lords.]

Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Wiveliscombe; Llandudno Junction; Croydon; Shipley (two); Paddington; Windhill; Torquay; Lewes; Saltaire; Leamington; Camden Town; Bristol; Bath; Madeley; Ramsbottom; and Heywood (three); to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE.

Petition from Liverpool and Bootle, for extension to women; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.

Petitions against; from Bethnal Green; Aston Newtown; Sheffield (two); Aston Cross; Bristol; Kingswood; and Windsor; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL (CHINESE LABOUR ORDINANCE).

Petition from Crewe, for withdrawal; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLLEGE CHARTER ACT, 1871 (YORKSHIRE COLLEGE, LEEDS).

Copy presented, of Application received from the Yorkshire College, Leeds, for the Establishment of a University in Leeds, which was referred by His Majesty in Council for the Consideration and Report of a Committee of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council; together with a copy of the draft of the Charter applied for [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

LEAD POISONING IN EARTHENWARE AND CHINA WORKS.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 11th March; *Mr. Cochrane*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 103.]

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).

Copy presented,—of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, No. 603 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Public Records (Admiralty).—Copy of Eleventh Schedule containing a list and Particulars of Classes of Documents which have been removed from the Office of the

Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and deposited in the Public Record Office, but are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation therein [by Act].

2. Public Records (Court of Exchequer).—Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents which formerly were or ought to have been in the Office of First Fruits and Tenths in the late Court of Exchequer, and which are now in the Public Record Office, but which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation therein [by Act].

CHANNEL ISLANDS (CROWN RIGHTS).

Return ordered, "of Revenues drawn from the Crown Rights in the Channel Islands in each year during the past five years, distinguishing for each Island separately the Amounts received from Tithes, from Fines on Transfer of Property, from Seigneurial Dues, and from other sources; and stating the Cost of Collection, the several Payments made for Local Purposes, and the Net Amount paid into the Exchequer (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 351, of Session 1899)."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

LOCAL TAXATION ACCOUNT.

Return ordered, "in the following form:—

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
Country.	Number of gallons at proof strength of tested spirits cleared for Home consumption year ended 30th day of September, 1903.	Number of liquid gallons of untested spirits cleared for Home consumption year ended 30th day of September, 1903.	Net amount paid over to the Local Taxation Accounts on account of Spirit Duties year ended 30th day of September, 1903.	Number of barrels of beer brewed year ended 30th day of September, 1903.	Number of barrels exported, destroyed, etc., on which the Duty has been remitted.	Net number of barrels liable for Local Taxation Account.	Net amount paid over to the Local Taxation Accounts on account of Beer Duty year ended 30th day of September, 1903.	Total amount paid over to the Local Taxation Accounts on account of Duties on Spirits and Beer year ended 30th day of September, 1903.
			£ s. d.				£ s. d.	£ s. d.
England								
Ireland								
Scotland								

—(*Mr. Nannetti.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Reappointment of Select Committee on Municipal Trading.

SIR JOHN ROLLESTON (Leicester): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to again appoint a Joint Select Committee on Municipal Trading this session in order to complete the work of the Committees of 1900 and 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I shall be very glad to see the reappointment of this Committee; but the necessary steps depend upon the state of business in the House.

Amendment of the Pharmacy Act.

MR. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if it is the intention of the Government to introduce this session a Bill to amend the Pharmacy Act; and, if not, whether the Government will afford facilities for the Second Reading of the Pharmacy Bill privately introduced this session.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) A Bill on this subject will be introduced in another place after Easter.

Swansea, Cardiff, and Newport Education Schemes.

Dr. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether, having regard to the fact that sanction has been given to the scheme of the London County Council, he will now sanction the schemes proposed under Section 17 of the Education Act of 1902 by the municipalities of Swansea, Cardiff, and Newport.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) No, Sir. The local authorities of Swansea, Cardiff, and Newport desire to confine the membership of their Education Committees (except as regard two women in each case) strictly to their respective councils, and the Board of Education have raised no objection to this arrangement. The Board have, however, asked the councils to retain the powers of co-opting two or three persons in case at some future time they should be of opinion that without such co-option they would be unable to provide from their own body persons of experience in education and persons acquainted with the needs of the schools in their areas. It is obvious that the conditions of London are essentially different from those of the municipalities in question.

Pay of Post Office Adult Night Messengers in Scotland.

Mr. BLACK (Banffshire): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the rate of pay allowed to adult night messengers in Scotland, especially in view of the hours in which their duties are performed; and, if so, whether he will take steps to increase their pay, and with a view to their further encouragement allow them good conduct stripes for each five years' approved service.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) My attention has not been called specially to the rate of pay allowed to adult night telegraph messengers in Scotland; but I find, from Returns which were taken in July last, that the pay is quite as high as that given in other parts of the United Kingdom, and I see no reason, therefore, for increasing it. Good conduct stripes are not given to telegraph messengers, even if they be adults, and I am not prepared to make any exception to this rule.

Irish Postal Servants and Volunteer Service.

Dr. RUTHERFOORD HARRIS (Camberwell, Dulwich): To ask the Postmaster-General, whether he is aware of the reply sent to a telegraphist in the Post Office service in Ireland, describing that official as an agitator because he had suggested an improvement in the conditions of service of himself and others in connection with the Volunteer service; and, if so, will he say whether his sanction was given to the terms of that reply; and will he cause inquiries to be made to ascertain whether the suggestions made by this telegraphist can be adopted in the interests of recruiting.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am not aware of the circumstances referred to by the hon. Member, but if he will furnish me with particulars I will have inquiry made into the matter.

Position of British East African Protectorates.

Sir M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, before the Votes for Uganda, British East Africa, and Somaliland are taken, he will present to the House a statement of the position of the four African Protectorates, similar to that in [Cd. 1635], Africa, No. 9, 1903, brought up to the latest possible date.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) A statement of the position of the four African Protectorates, in continuation of Africa, No. 9, 1903, will be presented in due course, but the final accounts of receipts and expenditure for the past financial year will not be available before July.

British Officers on the Staff of the Inspector-General of Macedonian Gendarmerie.

Mr. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can state the names of the British officers who have been selected for duty on the staff of General di Giorgis, Inspector-General of the Macedonian Gendarmerie, and when it is expected that they will join their French and Italian colleagues at Salonica, Monastir, and Florina.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The names cannot be stated until the Inspector-General has decided the exact number that will be required. It is hoped that this may be done within a few days when the scheme has been finally settled, and the General is ready to start from Constantinople.

Overcrowding on the North London Railway.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the third-class carriages of trains on the North London Railway are frequently so overcrowded that passengers are compelled to stand; and will he communicate with the railway company on the subject with a view to the provision of more accommodation on this line.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I have communicated with the railway company on the subject of the hon. Member's Question, and in reply they say that the instructions to their staff are to prevent overcrowding, but that it is impossible at all times to prevent passengers forcing their way into full compartments. It is added that it is only in certain of the morning and evening trains that crowding occurs.

Lighthouses and Lightships and Wireless Telegraphy.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, with a view to diminishing the danger of life at sea, he is taking measures for the connection of all the lighthouses and lightships on the British and Irish coasts by wireless telegraphy.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) Arrangements are being made by the Trinity House for the fitting up of wireless telegraphic apparatus on certain of their lightships on the east coast by way of experiment. The matter is being pushed forward, and an agreement for the use of patent rights has been drawn up, and is now being considered by the various Departments interested. Permission has been granted to Lloyds to establish a wireless telegraphic station at the Fastnet. I am unable to say at present to what extent the system will be applied to other light stations, many of which are already connected by cable with the shore.

Outbreak of Anthrax at Levenshulme.

MR. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford): To ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether his attention has been directed to the circumstances attending a recent outbreak of anthrax at Levenshulme, which resulted in the death of the owner of the affected animal, and the serious illness of the butcher by whom it was dressed; and what steps, if any, have been, or can be, taken to prevent any such occurrence in the future.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) The lamentable circumstances to which my hon. friend refers were brought under our notice, and a special inquiry was at once instituted with respect to them. The serious results, not only to animal but to human life which attend the slaughter in the ordinary way, and the dressing of the carcases of animals infected with anthrax, are well known to us, and we have distributed upwards of 360,000 copies of a leaflet calling attention to the danger. We have also addressed circular letters on the subject to the various local authorities. We propose now to issue a further special notice to stockowners cautioning them against the dressing of the carcases of animals which have died suddenly until the cause of death has been ascertained. This notice will be issued to local authorities for posting on walls, and for direct distribution to farmers and others concerned.

Local Authorities Loans—Terms of Repayment.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the fact that local authorities are now authorised to borrow money for the purposes of the Housing of the Working Classes Acts, to be repaid during a period of eighty years, but that the Public Works Loan Commissioners are not able to lend money for such purposes unless it be repaid within fifty years, he will introduce legislation to remedy this inconsistency.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I am not prepared to propose legislation for extending the maximum period of loans by the Public Works Loan Commissioners.

Spread of Plague in Central India.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India, in view of the fact that there were 3,721 deaths from plague in Central India last January as compared with 92 in January, 1903, will he state what steps are being taken to check the spread of the disease.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) All possible care is taken to prevent the spread of plague throughout India. Speaking generally, the State Medical Officers of the Native States forming the Central India Agency apply in the territories of their respective States the preventive and remedial measures which are employed in British India. These comprise (1) the provision of hospitals and medical aid for the sufferers; (2) disenfection of infected houses; (3) evacuation of infected quarters in towns and villages; (4) refuge camps for the uninfected; (5) inspection posts and observation huts at railway stations and on main routes; (6) inoculation where desired. The Epidemic Diseases Act of 1897 is in force in the Indore Residency Bazaars, and in the Cantonments of Mhow, Neemuch, and Nowgong, and sanitary rules made under it are enforced in those localities.

University Examinations at Allahabad —Danger of Plague.

Mr. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India, in view of the outbreak of plague at Allahabad, will arrangements be made for the approaching University Examinations to be held elsewhere.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) I have no doubt that the Government of the United Provinces will take all possible measures to secure the safety of the candidates appearing at the examinations of the Allahabad University.

Pupils in Irish Model Schools.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will give the number of pupils receiving instruction in the Irish model schools in 1903–4, and the amount spent on these schools out of public funds during the same period.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) It is not at present practicable to give this information for the period stated. During the calendar year 1903, there were 6,584 pupils in average attendance at the model schools. The net cost to the Vote for Public Education of the model schools for the same year was £29,463. This includes the cost of matrons, doctors, servants, allowances for rent, and cost of pupil teachers, but does not include the cost of maintenance of the buildings by the Board of Works.

Royal Irish Constabulary—Recommendations of Viceregal Report.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he intends to introduce legislation this session to give effect to the remainder of the recommendations contained in the Viceregal Report in connection with the Royal Irish Constabulary.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Such of the recommendations as do not involve legislation have been given effect to. I cannot, at present, undertake to fix a date for the introduction of the latter.

Grants for Erection and Enlargement of Irish Technical Schools.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any restriction has been imposed by Parliament on the Irish Department of Agriculture against giving grants for building purposes; and, if not, whether he can state that grants for the erection or enlargement of technical schools will be made upon existing conditions, viz., that one-half of the cost shall be contributed out of local rates.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) No such restrictions have been imposed. In reply to the latter part of the Question, the Department has no funds available for making grants for the purposes mentioned.

Salaries of Irish National Teachers.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, seeing that first class teachers who were in receipt of full class salary at the time of grading as well as during the three previous years (the average incomes of which were taken as the basis for fixing the present salaries), and whose schools have now and had during those years the necessary average attendance for first division of first grade, have been placed in the second division of first grade simply because their consolidated incomes (exclusive of capitation grant) fell between the maximum income of the second division of first grade and the minimum income of the first division of first grade, he will say whether teachers so placed, although having the same satisfactory reports as those teachers who at time of grading were in receipt of the prescribed income for the first division of first grade, must now obtain for three consecutive years the report noted excellent before they can be promoted to the first division of first grade or before they can receive such an increase of salary as will bring their income to the prescribed minimum of that grade; and whether teachers placed, by the accident of salary, in the first division of first grade can qualify for increments of salary by obtaining reports lower than excellent.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I am informed by the Commissioners that on the introduction of the present system of consolidated payments of teachers' salaries they allowed to each teacher his average income from State sources for the three years ended 31st March, 1900; or, if this arrangement operated inequitably, such a sum as in the judgment of the Commissioners was warranted by the circumstances of the particular case. The grade in which each teacher was then recognised was determined by the amount of his average income. The promotion of a teacher to a higher grade than that in which he was placed in view of his income was subject to the requirements of Rule 195 (g), (h), (i), (j), of the Commissioners' Code. This rule provides that promotion from a lower to a higher grade and from the second to the first section of the highest grade depends on (1) training; (2) position in school; (3) ability and general attainments; (4) good service; (5) seniority; (6) average attendance. Excellent or very good reports in respect of a school must have been received from the inspectors for three years subsequently to the 1st April, 1900, in order to warrant the promotion of a teacher from second division of first grade to first section of that grade, and he must have been recommended for such promotion by the senior Inspector of his circuit. Increments of salary within the limits of the scale of salaries provided for each grade are awarded on satisfactory evidence of "good service" within the triennial period in respect of which the increment is granted; but the Commissioners do not require so high a standard of excellence to warrant the award of an increment of continued good service salary as they do to merit the selection of a teacher for grade promotion.

Licensing Prosecutions—Right of Appeal.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the prosecution of Mrs. Hays at Portumna, county Galway, on 1st February, for a breach of the licensing law and to the small fine inflicted, which precluded the possibility of an appeal; and, if so, whether he will introduce legislation which will provide for a right of appeal in such cases.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Legislation is not necessary. It was open to the defendant to appeal against the conviction under Section 52 of the Licensing Act, 1872.

Batson Estate, County Galway.

MR. ROCHE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say what was the nature of the order which Mr. Justice Ross made on the 9th inst., in the matter of the Batson Estate in the county of Galway; and whether the Estates Commissioners will inquire into the circumstances of the case with a view to the purchase of the estate by them for the purpose of resale to the tenants, in view of the fact that they alone are prepared to make an offer for the purchase of the whole estate, and that the offer which they are prepared to make comprises an offer of £1,000 more for the grazing land than that which has been made by the mother of the owner who proposes to purchase the grazing land only.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I stated on Monday last† that as a condition of the agreement entered into with the lessee of the grazing land to which reference is specially made, she undertook to purchase the same. This agreement was made a year before the passing of the Act of 1903, and the Land Judge has decided that it cannot under the circumstances be disturbed. In respect of the other grazing lands on the estate, the Court directed the Receiver to prepare a scheme under which they will be distributed among the tenants in such a manner as to provide them all with substantial holdings.

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† See page 986.

Sale of Irish Estates in the Land Judge's Court.

MR. ROCHE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what course do the Estate Commission propose to adopt in cases where estates are for sale in the Land Judge's Court, where estates consisting partly of small uneconomic holding and partly of considerable grazing tracts, and where it is intimated to them that the tenants of tenanted portion are willing to buy the untenanted portion.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) It is not possible to give a general answer to this Question. Each estate and each individual holding must be dealt with on its own merits, having due regard to the entire circumstances.

Repayment of Advances made to Gold Coast Colony.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Gold Coast Colony has repaid any part of the advances made to it in 1898-9 of £29,441 for telegraph construction, and in 1900-1901 of £400,000 for the Ashanti war, or any part of £97,768 still due on account of advances made for the Ashanti War in 1895-6, and when he expects that any such repayments will be made; whether he will present to the House a statement of the revenue and expenditure and trade of the Gold Coast since 1895-6, and of Lagos and North and South Nigeria since Nigeria was taken over from the Royal Niger Company, of the same kind as that relating to the Protectorates on the East Coast of Africa (Cd. 1635, Africa, No. 9, 1903), before the Votes for the Gold Coast and North Nigeria are taken.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The Gold Coast has not yet repaid any part of the advances referred to, and it is not expected that any such repayments will be made until the state of the money market makes it possible to issue the further Railway Loan, and so set free the balances which have been applied to railway construction pending the issue of the loan. A statement of the revenue and expenditure and the trade of the Gold Coast and of Lagos and Northern and Southern Nigeria will be presented as desired.

Advances to Gold Coast, Lagos, and Niger Coast Protectorates.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what advances have been made or sanctioned to the Gold Coast, Lagos, and Niger Coast Protectorate, for the construction of railways and harbours under the Colonial Loans Act, 1899; at what rate of interest; and will the whole amounts sanctioned by that Act be required by these colonies.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) No advance has been made or sanctioned, or is now likely to be made, to the Gold Coast or to the Niger Coast Protectorate, under the Colonial Loans Act, 1899. To Lagos the whole amount sanctioned by the Act has been advanced, viz.: £792,400, at 3¼ per cent.

Nigeria Currency—Government Premium.

MR. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that British trade, both in Northern and Southern Nigeria, is hampered by a premium of 1 per cent. levied by the Government on all silver coin imported into these colonies; and whether, having regard to the fact that the Mint deliver silver coin free into Gambia, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, and Lagos, it will grant the same facilities to Nigeria; and, if not, for what reasons.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) In the Gambia, Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, and Lagos, a bank is established which is responsible for the disposal of redundant silver coin and which is permitted, in view of that responsibility, to import silver coin from the Mint, free of freight and other charges, and to charge a premium up to the amount of 1 per cent. on the nominal value of silver coin which it supplies to its customers. In Nigeria there is at present no such bank, and the responsibility for the disposal of redundant silver coin rests on the local Government, which charges the premium of 1 per cent. on the nominal value of silver coin obtained from the Mint for importation into Nigeria in order to safeguard itself against the expense of repatriating redundant coin. In these circumstances I am unable to admit that British trade is hampered by the charge in question or to hold out any expectation that the charge will be remitted.

Archbishopric of Cyprus.

Mr. YOXALL: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state the result of the intervention of the High Commissioner of Cyprus in the dispute between the rival candidates for the Archbishopric of that Island; and whether His Majesty's letters patent have been, or will be, issued to the Bishop nominated by the Synod for the Metropolitan See.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I am not yet in a position to state whether the High Commissioner's offer of his good offices in the dispute has resulted in any improvement in the prospect of an early settlement; but I will inquire. There will be no delay in taking such action as may be necessary on the part of His Majesty's Government for the confirmation of the new Archbishop when duly elected.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Army Supply and Transport Service.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the services of supply and transport under the control of the third Military Member of Council are to be directed as two separate and distinct departments, neither of which is to be directed by an officer of the Army Service Corps.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.): The organisation of these departments is not complete and I am therefore unable at the present time to give the information asked for by the hon. Member.

Royal Engineers.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is his intention to publish the Report of Lord Esher's Committee of March, 1902, upon the sub division of work in the Royal Engineers.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: As the House has been informed on a previous occasion, this inquiry was departmental, and it was not decided to publish the Report. I am not aware of any reason at the present time of departing from this decision.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: Has the recommendation of the Report been carried out?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I must ask for notice.

Ballincollig Powder Mills.

Mr. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the Royal Gunpowder Mills, Ballincollig, which were purchased some years ago by an English company, Curtis and Harvey, were closed last year and all work suspended and the work transferred to England; can he state if it is the intention of the present owners to reopen the mills; and, if not, would the War Office authorities consider the advisability of opening up negotiations with Messrs. Curtis and Harvey, with a view of buying out their interest, and working the mills under Government supervision and direction.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Nothing is known at the War Office of the purchase mentioned or of the intention of the alleged owners. It is not proposed that the War Department should purchase these mills.

Mediterranean Fleet.

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it is the intention of the Admiralty to reduce the period of a three years commission for ships and men on the Mediterranean station.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): The answer is in the negative.

Unemployed Kaffirs.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state the number of Kaffirs at present in what are termed the unemployed shelters in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony; and whether he can give the number of the occupants of these unemployed shelters on the first of each month for the last six months.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): No, Sir. I have not the information, but will make inquiry on the subject.

Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the sanction of His Majesty's Government must first be obtained before the issuing of the Proclamation by the Governor legalising the importation of Chinese indentured labour into the Transvaal; and, if so, for how long a period it is proposed to withhold such sanction.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The sanction of His Majesty's Government is not constitutionally or legally necessary. I cannot at present say when the Governor will be in a position to issue the Proclamation in question.

MAJOR SEELY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether in point of fact the sanction of the Government will be given before this Proclamation is issued?

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have said, Sir, it is not necessary.

MAJOR SEELY: Am I to understand that in point of fact the Proclamation will be issued without further reference to His Majesty's Government, or is the House to understand that the Proclamation may be issued by the Governor without reference to this country or to the Government?

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman is not bound to answer. The Question can be put down if the answer to it is not included in the answer already given.

MAJOR SEELY: Does the right hon. Gentleman refuse to answer?

*MR. LYTTELTON: I do not refuse to answer, but I ask that proper notice should be given of the Question, as I have already had experience of the difficulty of answering off-hand hypothetical Questions.

MAJOR SEELY: I purpose, and deem it important, to put down this Question.

White Labour in Gold Mines.

MAJOR SEELY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will consider the advisability of appointing a small Commission to obtain information as to the use of white labour in gold mines elsewhere than in the Transvaal; and, if not, if he will take steps to obtain this information by some other means.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I am not prepared to appoint such a Commission nor to take other steps to obtain this information, which I have reason to believe will not be relevant to the problem under consideration in the Transvaal.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Did Lord Milner tell you that?

Johannesburg Street Regulations against Coloured Persons.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Commissioner of Police in Johannesburg has issued a notice prohibiting coloured persons from using the sidewalks; whether this prohibition applies to British Indians in the Transvaal; and whether the regulation has been sanctioned by Lord Milner.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have no information as to any such recent notice. By the law of the Transvaal no coloured persons are allowed to walk on the sidepaths in the towns; but I understand from Lord Milner that the Transvaal police are under instructions not to interfere with respectably dressed and properly conducted Asiatics making use of sidepaths.

MR. BUCHANAN asked if this applied to British Indian subjects.

*MR. LYTTELTON was understood to answer, "Yes."

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: These are sons of the Empire.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Equal rights for all races.

Jameson Raid Indemnity.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state who has advised that no claim can be made to the indemnity for the Jameson Raid which the Chartered Company of British South Africa undertook to pay to the late South African Republic, now represented by His Majesty's Government.

*MR. LYTTELTON: His Majesty's Government received their advice from the Law Officers of the Crown.

MR. PIRIE: Was the decision based on the supposed non-liability of the Chartered Company, or on the basis of this country taking over the assets of the late South African Republic?

*MR. LYTTELTON: That Question should be put to the Attorney-General.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of producing this valuable opinion?

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): Are there any Papers that can be laid?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give notice of that Question.

Recruitment of Chinese Labour for the Transvaal.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state approximately when the Ordinance for the introduction of indentured Chinese labour into the Transvaal will be put into actual operation; and whether the recruitment of coolies in China for service under the Ordinance can be stopped until the Ordinance is in actual operation.

*MR. LYTTELTON: An approximate date cannot at present be given. His Majesty's Government cannot interfere with preliminary steps taken in China to engage labourers; but binding indentures of service cannot be made until the necessary conditions, precedent to the coming into operation of the Ordinance, have been fulfilled.

DR. MACNAMARA: Cannot the recruitment be stopped until the Ordinance is in actual operation?

*MR. LYTTELTON: We cannot interfere with the preliminary steps taken in China.

Lagos Railway—Coal Supplies.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, E. Toxteth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if his attention has been called to the price charged for coal supplied to the Lagos Railway in 1903 by the Crown Agents; and, if so, whether, in view of the fact that the price and quality of this coal have been adversely criticised in the Lagos Government Railway Report, he will consider the advisability of instructing the Crown Agents to adopt a system of open tender by advertisement for the supply and transport of all coal required by Crown Colonies and Protectorates.

*MR. LYTTELTON: No coal was supplied for the Lagos Railway by the Crown Agents in 1903, but all the coal used was purchased locally.

Transvaal Duties.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state the terms of the agreement between the Portuguese East African Territory and the South African Colonies as to Customs duties; and also state if there is any difference in duties levied on goods coming into the Transvaal by way of Delagoa Bay and by way of Cape Colony and Natal, and, if so, what is the nature of the difference.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The hon. Member no doubt refers to the Agreement for a *modus vivendi* made between the High Commissioner for South Africa and the Governor-General for Mozambique on 28th December, 1901, by Article XI. of which it is provided that goods entering the Transvaal in transit from Lorenço Marques shall have equal treatment with and pay no higher duties than the same class of goods sent in transit from Durban, East London, Port Elizabeth, and Capetown. It preserves the provisions of the Treaty of 11th December, 1875, between Portugal and the South African Republic, and allows the importation free of duty into the Transvaal of any goods excepting spirits, the growth, produce, or manufacture of the Portuguese Province of Mozambique.

Colonial Opinion on Preferential Duties.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state whether any resolutions from any Colonial Board of Trade, Chamber of Commerce, Manufacturers' Association, or Agricultural Society, or from any Colonial Legislative Assembly, against preferential duties has been received at the Colonial Office; also whether any resolutions from Colonial Legislatures in favour of preferential relations between the Colonies and England were received by the Government prior to 1903, if so, from what country, who was the Colonial Minister at the time, and what reply was made by him to such resolution or resolutions; also, will he state whether any resolution or resolutions in favour of preferential relations have been passed by any Canadian Legislature or Legislatures during the years 1903 and 1904.

*MR. LYTTELTON: So far as can be traced in the books of the Colonial Office no resolution against preferential duties has been received in recent years, nor any resolution of a Colonial Legislature in favour of preferential relations, prior to 1903. If such resolutions have been passed by any Colonial or Provincial Legislature, they do not appear to have been communicated to His Majesty's Government.

Venezuelan Tariffs.

MR. SOARES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the Government of Venezuela now imposes a 30 per cent. differential surtax on importations from the West Indian Colonies into Venezuela contrary to the provisions contained in Article IV. of the Treaty of 1825; whether frequent representations have been made by the Trinidad Chamber of Commerce to the Colonial Office on the matter; and whether, if the negotiations between His Majesty's Government and the Government of Venezuela should be abortive, His Majesty's Government are prepared to retaliate against the Govern- of Venezuela by the imposition of duties on importations from Venezuela into the United Kingdom.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The answer to the first two paragraphs is in the affirmative; as regards the third His Majesty's Government have not thought it necessary to consider the course which they would adopt in the event suggested.

MR. SOARES: When do the Government propose to consider the question?

*MR. LYTTELTON: When the event occurs.

British Indians in Cape Colony.

SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington): On behalf of the hon. Member for Dewsbury, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if his attention has been drawn to the fact that the Bombay Chamber of Commerce has protested against the Cape Colony Immigration Act of last year, on the ground that British Indians should have the same rights enjoyed by all other subjects of His Majesty of going to and residing in any part of the King's dominions entirely unrestricted by legislation, and, if so, will he state what action in response to this protest has been taken by the Government of India or by His Majesty's Ministers.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): I am aware of the protest from the Bombay Chamber of Commerce referred to in the Question. The Cape Colony Immigration Act was passed by the Legislature of a self-governing colony, and closely resembles legislation which is in force in other British colonies. In these circumstances His Majesty's Government did not consider it possible to take any action of the kind suggested in the Question.

The Tibet Mission.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India has an order been sent to the Government of India directing hostilities to be undertaken in Tibet; and, if so, was the order absolute or contingent on events; what was the date of such order, if any, and when will a copy thereof be laid upon the Table of the House; has the consent of the Tibetan Government now been asked for to the entry of a Mission, with an armed escort and guns, into Tibetan territory.

Mr. BRODRICK: No order directing hostilities to be undertaken in Tibet has been sent to the Government of India, but Colonel Younghusband has been instructed to defend the Mission should it be attacked. Having regard to the persistent failure of the Tibetan Government to negotiate, His Majesty's Government did not make the advance of the Mission dependent on their consent.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Then does my right hon. friend say that to send an armed expedition into that country is not a hostile act?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is a debatable matter of opinion.

General Sir Ian Hamilton.

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state why Sir Ian Hamilton, late Quartermaster-General in England, has been appointed representative of the Indian Army with the Japanese Army, seeing that he is not an Indian officer; and was the Indian Council, by whom he is paid, consulted with reference to his appointment.

Mr. BRODRICK: Sir Ian Hamilton, besides being an officer of great ability and distinction, has long experience in India, where he satisfactorily held several staff appointments. As he is already in Japan, his services were immediately available, and the Indian Government and the Council of India, who were consulted, agreed to the selection. Two officers of the Indian Army will join him.

Captain NORTON: Was the Indian Council consulted before he was sent? Why was not an Indian officer chosen?

Mr. BRODRICK: Both the Indian Government and the Indian Council were consulted, and they agreed to the arrangement.

Scotch Herring Exports to Russia.

***Mr. MACONOCHIE** (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that 60,000 barrels of Norwegian herrings were lately imported into Archangel duty free; and, if so, whether Scotch herrings will be entitled to similar favourable treatment under the most-favoured-nation clause of our commercial treaties with Russia.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.): No, Sir; but the Vice-Consul at Archangel will be instructed to report on the matter.

Jubaland.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the further Papers concerning Jubaland, promised by the Foreign Office last session, are yet ready; and when they will be published.

Earl PERCY: I am not aware that any pledge was given, nor do I understand to what Papers the hon. Member refers.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: The late Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in the course of a debate, stated that Papers would be laid at the end of last session. I shall be happy to give the noble Lord the reference.

EARL PERCY: Perhaps the hon. Member will communicate with me on the subject.

Merchandise Marks Act.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if, having regard to the injury done to British trade in the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce of Liverpool and other bodies by the use of the words "Made in Germany" upon imported goods, in accordance with the regulations under the 16th Section of The Merchandise Marks Act, 1887, and in view of the Report of the Select Committee of 1897 that the object would be substantially gained and British trade enterprise improved by substituting for the specification of the country of origin the words "Made Abroad," he will direct the regulations to be amended in this sense.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): I am advised that I have no power to amend the regulation in the sense desired, as statutory authority would be required to do so.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Will my right hon. friend introduce a Bill for that purpose?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not think there is any need for me to introduce a Bill; the Board of Trade should do it.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Will facilities be given for a Bill introduced by the hon. Member himself in order to repeal the Act.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: That rests with the Leader of the House.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Were these words not purposely inserted in the Merchandise Marks Act?

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Not by me.

Chancery Fund and Converted Annuities

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state whether the final instalments of the Chancery Fund Annuities of £2,943,370 a year and of the Converted Annuities of £684,000 a year fall to be paid in the financial year 1904–5 or in 1905–6; and whether it is proposed to follow the Budget precedent of 1899 in anticipating the falling in of these annuities by a proportionate reduction of the Sinking Fund contribution for redemption of the National Debt.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Chancery Funds Annuity was readjusted last year and its amount is now £2,324,516. The final instalment is payable in July, 1906. The final instalment of the Converted Annuities is payable in February, 1906. I have no announcement to make at this stage as to financial arrangements for the future.

Sugar Refineries—Cost of Supervision.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the cost of supervising sugar refineries in bond is borne by the owners of the refineries or by the State; if the former, what is the amount charged, and how is the money collected; and if the latter, what the estimated cost will be for the years ending the 31st March, 1904, and the 31st March, 1905.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The cost of supervising sugar refineries is borne by the Crown, but refiners are required to bear the overtime expenses of officers who attend, at their request, to control deliveries of sugar, etc., either before 6 a.m. or after 6 p.m. The estimated cost of supervision for the period from the 1st September last (when the refineries were placed under bond) till the 31st instant is £9,000, and for the year ending 31st March, 1905, £16,020.

Income-Tax Abatement.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is compulsory for companies and others, who deduct income-tax from payments made by them, to furnish in all cases the certificate of deduction which the Income-Tax Commissioners require to be produced by persons claiming abatements; and, if not, whether he will consider the desirability of making such certificates obligatory whenever the person from whose income the tax has been deducted desires to obtain such a certificate.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: There is no statutory obligation on companies or others to furnish certificates of deduction of income-tax; and if it were common to refuse such certificates, or to put taxpayers to expense in obtaining them, it would, I think, be necessary to impose such obligation by law. But the Board of Inland Revenue doubt whether in practice there is much need for legislation in that sense. Most companies issue with their dividend warrants a counterfoil containing a certificate of deduction of income-tax; and where a certificate is wanting its absence can very often be supplied by other evidence which the Commissioners will accept as establishing the fact of deduction of income-tax.

Foreign Labour in Scotch Collieries.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the statement of Mr. R. Smellie, at the Miners' Conference on Friday, the 11th instant, that in Lanarkshire there were over 2,000 foreign workmen employed, who were brought into this country, and not being able to speak a word of the language, and never having seen a coal mine before a safety lamp was put in their hands, were sent to work in fiery mines; if these men are sent to a work in groups in contravention of General Rule 39; and whether he will take steps to prevent the introduction of these unskilled men into the mines in view of the danger to the lives of the miners.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I can only repeat what I have said in answer to a Question on the same subject on the 19th of last month,† and to previous Questions, that, after careful inquiry on several occasions, no evidence has been forthcoming to show that these foreigners are a cause of danger to the other miners employed in the same mines. No complaint has reached me that men are being employed in contravention of General Rule 39, but I will make inquiry of the Mines Inspectors on the point.

Loch Ness Mails.

MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that the steamers carrying the mails have ceased to call at Abriachan Pier on Loch Ness; and whether, in view of the effect of this upon the postal arrangements in that district, he proposes to take any, and, if so, what, steps in the matter.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I understand that Abriachan Pier on Loch Ness can no longer be used with safety, and the steamer by which the mails for Abriachan have hitherto been conveyed has therefore ceased to call. Under these circumstances, it has been necessary to send the mails by postmen instead of by steamer, with the result that while the delivery at Abriachan is made earlier, the outward service is not so good as before. Until the pier is repaired, I am sorry there will be no alternative but to continue the present arrangement.

South Wales Education Schemes.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether, having regard to the fact that sanction has been given to the scheme of the London County Council, he will now sanction the schemes proposed under Section 17 of the Education Act of 1902 by the municipalities of Swansea, Cardiff, and Newport.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): No, Sir. The local authorities of Swansea, Cardiff, and Newport desire to confine the membership of their Education Committees (except as regards two women in each case) strictly to their respective councils, and the Board of Education have raised no objection to this arrangement. The Board have, however, asked the councils to retain the power of co-opting two or thre persons in case at some future time they should be of opinion that without such co-option they would be unable to provide from their own body persons of experience in education and persons acquainted with the needs of the schools in their areas. It is obvious that the conditions of London are essentially different from those of the municipalities in question.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxx., 446.

DR. MACNAMARA: May I ask whether the provision insisted on is or is not in the London scheme?

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: We have not thought it necessary to ask the County Council of London to retain this limited power of co-option, as the case in which it is necessary is not likely to arise.

Belfast Deputy Coroner.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that a summons was issued by order of the Registrar of Deaths against the Deputy-Coroner of Belfast, and listed for hearing on 23rd February last, it was then adjourned till the 8th of the present month, when it was finally withdrawn; and, if so, whether he can state under what circumstances the summons was issued and for what reason, and by whose authority it was withdrawn; and if he has any objection to laying upon the Table the correspondence between the registrar and coroner in this case.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): In this case the inquest was held on the 30th January, and the certificate of the finding of the coroner's jury should have been sent forward to the local registrar at latest on the 4th February. It was not, however, sent until the 6th February. The Registrar-General directed a summons to be issued under the 29th Section of the 43 & 44, Cap. 13, against the Deputy-Coroner, who was absent through illness. The Deputy explained that the omission was due to his absence in London where he had been required to give important evidence at a Home Office Inquiry respecting regulations for docks. He undertook to be more careful in future, and the prosecution was, at the suggestion of the Under-Secretary, dropped.

MR. SLOAN: Has the right hon. Gentleman any objection to laying the correspondence on the Table.

MR. ATKINSON: It is too trifling.

MR. MACVEAGH: Was not the objection in regard to this trifling matter made by a professional colleague?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Kiladysert Creek.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will consider the request of the Kiladysert District Council that the Kiladysert Creek should be improved and rendered navigable; and whether, as this matter has been pressed on the attention of the Government many times, he will see that something practical is now done to meet the difficulty complained of.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The Department, to which I undertook to refer this proposal, will consider the question of making a contribution towards the cost of the works of improvement if the county council will instruct the county surveyor to prepare rough plans and estimates.

Land Commission Appeals.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that several appeals have been lodged by tenants with the Head Land Commission for close on two years in connection with judicial rents fixed by the Sub-Land Commission on the Dunsandle Estate, near Loughrea; and whether he will explain the circumstances which made such a delay possible.

MR. WYNDHAM: There are thirteen appeals pending from this estate, of which eleven were lodged twelve months ago and the remaining two recently. A sitting for the hearing of appeals will be held at Galway on the 31st May.

MR. CLANCY: (Dublin County, N.) Can the right hon. Gentleman hold out any hope that in future general arrangements will be made for expediting the hearing of these appeals all over Ireland.

MR. WYNDHAM: I believe that everything possible is being done.

AN HON. MEMBER: You have said that over and over again.

Charitable Loan Fund Societies.

MR. EDWARD MITCHELL (Fermanagh, N.), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce any legislation in regard to the Charitable Loan Fund Societies (Ireland); and, if so, when.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am prepared to introduce the Bill of last session provided I receive an assurance that it will be treated as a non-contentious measure.

Royal Irish Constabulary and the United Irish League.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that members of the Royal Irish Constabulary are stationed outside the house in which the Lismore branch of the United Irish League holds its meetings during the time such meetings are proceeding; and, if so, will he state by whose direction this is done and for what purpose; and whether he will direct that this practice should be discontinued in view of the peacefulness of the district.

MR. WYNDHAM: The police on duty in the vicinity of the house at which these meetings are held is the ordinary street patrol sent out to enforce the licensing laws.

MR. O'SHEE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this practice is continually going on?

MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Is not the right hon. Gentleman aware that it is the practice of the police, when patrolling the streets, to station themselves close to where these meetings are being held?

MR. WYNDHAM: My information is that the police are not stationed against a particular house.

MR. SHEEHAN: They actually take the names of persons attending these meetings.

Longford Mail Arrangements.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the limited mail delivery of letters at Longford Station at 9.13 a.m. and 5.5 p.m. is usually a heavy mail; and that the hand-cart on which the postmen are invited to drag the bags to the station is over 6 cwt. in weight; and, if so, whether he will direct that these two mail deliveries be included in the new contract just entered into.

LORD STANLEY: The average weight of the mails at 9.13 a.m. is about 84 lbs., and at 5.5 p.m. about 56 lbs., while the hand-cart weighs 3 cwt. Under these circumstances I do not consider that it is necessary to convey these mails by horse and car.

Jury Packing in Ireland.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.) I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland a Question of which I have given private notice, viz., whether his attention has been called to the statement of Chief Baron Pallas at the Cork Assizes on an occasion when jurors were ordered to stand aside, to the effect that they could go home for the rest of the Assizes, as it was of no use keeping them there when they were never allowed by the Crown to serve, and whether, after that protest by so eminent a Judge, the unconstitutional practice of ordering Nationalist jurors to stand aside by the Crown for political reasons will be discontinued.

MR. WYNDHAM replied that he did not think the words of the Judge could be correctly described as a protest. In any case, he had no announcement to make on the exercise by the Crown of the right of ordering jurors to stand aside.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: Would not the national festival of St. Patrick be a convenient opportunity for discontinuing the practice?

[No answer was returned.]

Steamship Communication with East Africa.

MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what steps His Majesty's Government propose to take to carry out the recommendation of the Steamship Subsidies Committee, that a subsidy for establishing direct British communication with East Africa should be favourably considered, in view of special Imperial considerations and the handicapping of British trade in that quarter by foreign subsidised steamship lines.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): In principle the Government approve the policy of aiding further means of steamship communication with East Africa. We propose to appoint a Departmental Committee to consider the details of the question.

Out-Door Relief (Friendly Societies) Bill.

MR. GRETTON (Derbyshire, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the Out-Door Relief (Friendly Societies) Bill now on the Paper; and whether, in the event of the progress of the Bill being impeded, he will later on in the session give facilities for its various stages.

*SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers may I ask whether the blocking has not arisen from the action of the hon. Member in appropriating another Member's Bill against the general practice on both sides.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not feel at all qualified to enter into any controversy which may have arisen as between the hon. Gentleman and my hon. friend, or as to the patent right which may exist in regard to their measures; but with regard to the Bill in itself and on its merits, the President of the Local Government Board has already in a previous session explicitly announced an approval of the measure. It passed last session, I believe after midnight, without opposition, and I do not see any reason why it should have a more troubled course in the present session. I can hardly be expected to answer the last part of the Question, though I would remind my hon. friend of the difficulties—I have often had occasion to point them out to the House—of giving special privileges to private Bills.

*SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: Will the Government be prepared to introduce the Bill into the House of Lords as a Government measure, as that is the only chance it can have of passing.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no right to speak for what the House of Lords is likely to do with this or any other measure, but I should have thought that if it passed in this House it might have a happier fate than last year.

*SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: It has been twice thrown out by the House of Lords.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Bill might have as much chance of being thrown out if introduced there as if introduced here.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: Not if it were a Government measure.

Committee on National Expenditure.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury has any decision been arrived at by His Majesty's Government for giving the House an opportunity to discuss the advisability of giving effect to the recommendation of the Committee on National Expenditure, that an Estimates Committee should be appointed each session for examination of and report upon one Class of the Estimates; and has the form of a Motion on which such a discussion may take place been now considered and decided.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I have no satisfactory answer to give to my hon. friend. I hoped to have some conversation with the right hon. Gentleman opposite on the subject, and entirely through my own fault no opportunity has yet arisen.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): Will the right hon. Gentleman take into consideration the fact that this Committee was appointed on his own initiative to provide machinery, supplementary and complementary, to his own Supply Rule and the new Rules of Procedure.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is now entering into argument.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: With great respect, Sir, I claim to finish by asking whether, having regard to the fact I have stated, the right hon. Gentleman will assign some day before which he may possibly find some opportunity of consulting with the right hon. Gentleman opposite.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no reason to believe that any opportunity for conversation such as the right hon. Gentleman could give me will be postponed to a late date. I must take exception to the argument which appeared to underlie the statements of the hon. Member, that we are specially bound to spare a day for the discussion of the Report of this Committee because of our initiation. If the Government acceded to the request to investigate, this does not lay upon us any special responsibility to find time to discuss the Report of the Committee. I believe I am not wrong in saying that the recommendations which my hon. friend is so anxious to discuss were carried in the Committee itself by a single Vote.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: Will my right hon. friend endeavour to secure an opportunity for the consultation with the right hon. Gentleman after Questions this afternoon?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must say my hon. friend is trespassing on the individual liberties of both sides of the House when he endeavours to prescribe to us the precise hour at which we should come into consultation.

The Education Rate.

MR. BLACK: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the difficulties which are attending the enforcement of the education rate in England; whether any such difficulties have ever been experienced in Scotland; and, if not, whether the Government will now take steps to assimilate the law in England to the law in Scotland.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As one of the chief objections felt by Nonconformists to the English Bill of 1902 arose out of the fact that, in their opinion, the rates are devoted to teaching denominational religion, and as that is the habitual practice in Scotland——

AN HON. MEMBER: Public control.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is a second objection. The first objection is that the rates are used to give denominational teaching. That is the Scottish system, which is objected to in England, and therefore I presume no peace would be attained by introducing the Scottish system into this country.

MR. BLACK: Will the right hon. Gentleman give the Nonconformists an opportunity of considering the question and think the matter over for himself?

DR. MACNAMARA: Under the Scottish system is education not entirely under public control?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, there are a great many differences between the Scottish and English systems. But I was making allusion to one difference which is relevant to the Question of the hon. Member, not to other differences which are irrelevant.

*MR. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs): Is it not the fact that the objection of Nonconformists is to paying for the cost of education not under public control?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that is an objection.

*MR. ALFRED DAVIES: Is it not the main objection?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, I think it is not the main objection. The hon. Member has told us so. He is a passive resister. The reason that passive resistance is popular among the hon. Gentleman's friends is that they have a conscientions objection to the teaching of denominational religion with which they disagree.

*Mr. ALFRED DAVIES: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman again whether it is not the fact that Nonconformists object to paying rates because there is not complete public control.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: That may be the only objection of the hon. Gentleman, and in that case he is willing to support any plan for allowing the ratepayers of the country to teach denominational religion in board schools; but in that he is not in harmony with the great body of Nonconformist opinion.

*Mr. ALFRED DAVIES rose again.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I cannot allow an education debate.

Expense of Parliamentary Elections.

Mr. BLACK: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the proportion of the expense of Parliamentary elections which is incurred through the charges of returning officers and their assistants; and whether with the view of facilitating the return of manual labourers and other persons of moderate means to serve in this House, the Government will, before the ensuing general election, take steps to place these charges on public funds.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Government do not propose to deal with any subject connected with our electoral system during the course of the present Parliament, but I do not answer as to what we may decide to do in the next two or three years.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: May I ask whether that answer includes the question of redistribution?

Mr. BLACK: Is the decision due to want of time before the general election?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know to what want of time the hon. Gentleman alludes.

Parliamentary Arrangements—Hour of Meeting.

Mr. DISRAELI (Cheshire, Altrincham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, in view of recent events, whether he is prepared to view favourably the House reverting to its former convenient hour of meeting, and the abolition of the dinner interval.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: There are, of course, objections to any conceivable plan of allotting Parliamentary time; but if my hon. friend will cast his mind back to the objection felt to the old system he will agree, I think, that the new system, whatever may be the objections to it, is far preferable. I do not mean to go further than to say that we ought to have an important block of time for the discussion of public affairs in the afternoon, an interval for dinner, and afterwards the opportunity for further debate on new Motions. I do not believe the House will ever abandon that system, whether we meet a little earlier or later.

Russian Cruiser at Suez.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): On behalf of the hon. and learned Member for South Leeds I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he has any official information showing that the Russian cruiser "Dimitri Danskoi" has been making use of Suez as a naval base for belligerent operations, and that, after repairing and fitting out at that port, notwithstanding the protests of the authorities, she is now engaged in stopping and searching British and other steamers in the Mediterranean; and, if so, does he propose to take any steps to stop these or similar operations in future.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I quite admit the great importance of the Question put to me, but I must be allowed time to collect the facts to enable me to give a complete answer.

The Vote of Censure.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will afford a day for bringing forward the Motion in regard to the Labour Ordinance for the Transvaal.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that the right hon. Gentleman proposes a vote of censure on His Majesty's Government in connection with the course adopted in regard to yellow labour in the Transvaal. I will not too closely inquire whether I might not plead against that the fact that there have been, a few weeks ago, two days spent in discussing a Vote of censure in relation to this subject; but as we are as desirous as the right hon. Gentleman can be to bring this matter to an issue, and as we think we have nothing to gain by delaying an exposition of the reasons which have induced us to adopt the policy we have pursued, I shall ask the House to take advantage of the very first opportunity it is in the power of the Government to give and to take the Motion upon next Monday.

Major SEELY: May I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to undertake that the Proclamation which will make the Ordinance operative shall not be permitted to issue until the discussion has taken place.

[No answer was returned.]

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Lewis Vernon Harcourt, esquire, for North East Lancashire (Rossendale Division).

NEW BILLS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (1888) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Local Government Act, 1888," presented by Mr. Spear; supported by Mr. Duke, Mr. Herbert Robertson, and Mr. Mildmay; to be read a second time upon Monday, 11th April, and to be printed. [Bill 130.]

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT (1897) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Infant Life Protection Act, 1897," presented by Mr. Spear; supported by Mr. Duke, Mr. Schwann, Mr. Lindsay Hogg, Mr. Melville, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Mildmay, and Mr. Allen; to be read a second time upon Monday, 11th April, and to be printed. [Bill 131.]

THE LATE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the House will agree with me that we ought not to enter on business this afternoon without making some reference to the melancholy event that occurred this morning—the death of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge. The Duke of Cambridge was not merely a distinguished member of the Royal Family; he was not merely the oldest member of the Royal Family in this country, a contemporary of our late Queen; but he was a man who devoted by far the larger portion, I may say the whole portion, of his active life to the earnest service of this country. He served his country in the field, he served his country in the high office of Commander-in-Chief; and, though I suppose it would be too much to hope that at any time of our political history questions connected with the War Office should be outside the pale of controversy, there is one thing in which every man will agree—namely, that the Duke of Cambridge devoted to this great office his whole time, his whole energy, his whole strength, and that he was intimately and profoundly acquainted with every question that affected the British Army, and that throughout his whole career he possessed the confidence of both officers and men. I am sure the House will feel with me that a great figure has disappeared from among us, and that not merely of a member of the Royal Family, but of a zealous and devoted servant of the State, and that it would not be fitting that we should pass the melancholy occasion by without some expression, even though that expression be informal in character, of our sorrow for the event and of our deep sympathy with the illustrious family of which he was a member.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am sure the right hon. Gentleman has taken a course which will meet the feeling of every Member of the House. I have nothing to add to what the First Lord of the Treasury has said of the Duke of Cambridge. It so happens that I perhaps have had a longer relationship with him in the administration of public affairs than almost any other Member of the

House; and therefore I can bear testimony to the fact that the picture which the right hon. Gentleman has drawn has not been too highly coloured. The Duke of Cambridge was devoted, with an intensity of devotion beyond description, to the Army of which he was the Commander-in-Chief for many years. I may, perhaps, refer to the fact that it was while I was Secretary of State that he came to the conclusion that he ought to relinquish the high position he held. I can bear witness to the extreme reluctance and almost anguish which he felt in severing that connection, and, at the same time, to his loyal acceptance of the necessity of its being severed, as he felt advancing years telling upon him. I feel sure that during the few years that have passed since he retired from active life he has enjoyed the recollection of all the years of close association with the Army in which his life had been passed. Sir, the Duke of Cambridge was not only a conspicuous figure in the public life and society of this country, but he was the true friend of all his friends. He had a personal charm which drew to him every one with whom he came in contact, and both in that sense —in the sense of the personal feeling of affection which he created in all who knew him—and also as a notable and loyal, faithful and energetic public servant, he deserves, I think, all the eulogy which the right hon. Gentleman has passed upon him. I would associate myself, and those on this side of the House, with the expression which he has given to our regret and to our sympathy with the Royal house in the loss it has sustained.

SUPPLY [4TH ALLOTTED DAY] [10TH MARCH, AFTERNOON SITTING].

Resolution Reported.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

"That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 227,000, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

Resolution read a second time.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said that they had discussed the Army Estimates in Committee under somewhat difficult circumstances; but at any rate they had tried to enforce on the Government that there must be a considerable reduction in the expenditure on the Army in the near future. That reduction might be secured by the abolition of the linked battalion system and the abominable Army Corps scheme—leaving the defence of the country more to the Auxiliary Forces. He was willing to take any pledge from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War that he would reduce the number of men during the current year. He hoped that the new system about to be introduced at the War Office would include economy as well as efficiency. To a certain extent the recommendations of the Reconstitution Committee had been accepted by the Secretary of State for War as representing the Government; but on all the points accepted there was not any sign of economy, which was an absolute necessity, as was patent to everybody. It was a self-evident fact that we could not go on spending the enormous sums we now were. He knew that the Secretary of State for War agreed on this point with the Army reformers with whom he had worked so long and whose opinions he still shared, that the linked battalion system and the Army Corps should be done away with, so as to get a cheaper as well as a more efficient Army than we had at the present moment. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman had great difficulty in actually carrying out his ideas in consequence of the opposition of some Gentlemen who sat on the same Bench with him; but what was wanted was a pledge from the right hon. Gentleman that he would get the upper hand in this controversy and that he would do his best to carry out economic reforms. He did not wish to press any such large reduction as he had put down on the Paper; and would be content with a reduction of 5,000 men. Not only was the good of the country at stake in this economy, but the interests of the Army itself and its popularity. He knew that some reduction had already been made on the present Estimates, but in his opinion these were not as large as they might have been, and something more should be done in the interests of economy. Moreover, that reduction was not real; because expenditure would speedily jump up by leaps and bounds in consequence of the necessary alterations in the armament of the Artillery. He moved the reduction of the number of men by 5,000.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out 227,000, and insert 222,000, instead thereof."—(*Mr. Courtenay Warner.*)

Question proposed "That 227,000 stand part of the said Resolution."

*MR. PEEL (Manchester, S.) said he did not propose to follow the particular line of reasoning on which the hon. Member for the Lichfield Division had embarked. He rather desired to draw attention to the more general question and elicit from from the Secretary of State for War a definite statement as to the attitude the Government were going to take up in regard to the scheme drawn up by the War Office Reconstitution Committee.

MR. SPEAKER said it would not be in order for the hon. Member to deal with that question now. The only question before the House was the question of men.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) submitted on a point of order that some portions of the Report bore so closely on the number of men that it could hardly be excluded.

MR. SPEAKER said if the hon. Member dealt with the number of men he would be in order, but what he proposed to do was to call on the Government for a general statement of the attitude they intended to take up.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE pointed out that one of the particular parts of the Report which bore closely on the number of men was that which stated that the linked battalion system must be got rid of.

MR. SPEAKER: On that point I will not stop the hon. Member.

*MR. PEEL said the question of the linked battalion system bore a very close relation to the question before the House, and the question was also, as he conceived, connected with the question of the reorganisation of the Army, because it bore upon the composition of the Army Corps and the relation of the Army Corps to the War Office. There were, in fact, so many parts of the Report that definitely related to the Vote before the House that there would be no difficulty in keeping within the terms of Mr. Speaker's ruling. When this subject was discussed before on Vote A some statements were made by the Secretary of State for War, who, amongst other things, told the House that with the Report of the Committee he had the greatest sympathy and that, although he could not pledge himself to any particular line of action, that portion of the Report had his entire sympathy, and he hoped the recommendations would be adopted *en bloc.* Circumstances had happened since then which had made those deeply interested in this matter very anxious, and he pressed the right hon. Gentleman to state what had been done and what he was doing in respect of this question. It would be a great thing for the House if the right hon. Gentleman could allay the natural anxiety which was being felt by the House as to the degree of energy which the Government were putting into this portion of the Report, by stating what had been done already and what it was intended to do in the future to carry out these recommendations. The Report which had been drawn up had received the support of a consensus of the best military opinion. It was an open secret that the general provisions and principles laid down in that Report embodied not only the best military opinion, but also the best civilian opinion, on this subject, which in many respects brought a rather wider criticism to bear on these military questions. Nobody suggested that any blame rested on the Government because they were asked to modify their previous scheme. All that was asked was whether in the face of the knowledge acquired through the War Office Commission the Government were going to modify their scheme. All the suggestions made by the Commission were intended to hang together, and the Government had shown their earnestness in the reforms by creating the Army Council, and abolishing the office of Commander-in-Chief, but if, having gone so far, the Government were going to turn away from the other recommendations, then the whole thing fell to the ground. The scheme was a coherent scheme and intended to hang together, and it was impossible if it was intended to be of any benefit to the Army that some portion of the scheme should be picked out, without other portions of it being applied. The country appreciated the fact that there was great necessity for a drastic change in the Army schemes of Army reorganisation, and, from the point of view of the Government and the Party, he could imagine nothing that would have a worse effect than that an idea should get abroad that the Government, having accepted one portion of the scheme, should falter and show some trepidation and some tendency to turn their backs on the rest of the scheme, which it was absolutely necessary to carry out as a whole if it were to benefit our Army. There was a large body of opinion, both in and outside the House, which was determined to thrust, as far as possible, on the Government the principle of this scheme. That body of opinion was not confined to one section of the House alone. Various sections had united to press this demand on the Government. All that body of opinion was centred on the adoption of the recommendations of this Report, and if the right hon. Gentleman, who had been very kindly dealt with on the presentation because of the feeling that the right hon. Gentleman himself was fully in favour of the Estimates, was pressed now it was because of the feeling that the right hon. Gentleman himself was fully in favour of these reforms. He wished if possible to strengthen the hands of the right hon. Gentleman in the Government, in order that he might be able to do what he thought right. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would state clearly and explicitly what had been done since they last discussed this subject, and what definite hopes he could hold out to them for the future that he was going to lay broad and strong the foundations of reform in the Army on the principles set forth so clearly in the Report.

* COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince) said all were agreed that the country ought to be properly insured for defence. If it was necessary to keep 75,000 men in India then a like number of men must be retained in this country to maintain them. These men must be grouped in Battalions or in Depots. His own belief was that the present system of Battalions was the cheapest by which a force could be maintained abroad, and a sufficient Regular force maintained at home. The Militia was the stand-by of the country; but if it were to be equal to a foreign army it would cost more than the troops in England at present. His opinion was that the Militia and Volunteers were the great potential Reserve of the country; and that the present system could not be much improved, except as to recruiting. It succeeded thoroughly during the South African war in sending out men and stores. He believed that the failures in the early part of that war were caused, as the Prime Minister stated, because they under-rated their enemy; but he did not agree with his right hon. friend as to what precisely they did under-rate. It was not a question merely of under-rating the Boers as armed civilians; it was that this country did not appreciate the extraordinary effect produced by the rifle with its magazine and smokeless powder, which led one to believe that there were twenty men where there was only one and enabled the man who fired not to be seen, and to the mobility the Boers derived from their ponies which enabled them to anticipate turning movements. When the British troops got out to a country of long horizons they found themselves exposed to a new phase of war. That was the origin of the failures in the early part of the war; and the House might depend on it that history would yet show that the sweeping condemnation of the Army in this country was a mistake. The same thing had happened before. In 1866 the Austrians did not appreciate the effect of the breech-loader in war, and the result was that they were wiped out in seven weeks. Yet, as allies of Russia, they had seen the weapon in 1864. The only country in which that effect was appreciated was England. Without

depreciating the effects which had been produced by the late war, he hoped that the lessons learned would be applied to the Navy as well as to the Army. When a fleet possessed some chemical or mechanical appliance which its adversary had not it might be in a position of great superiority. They ought to be most careful in watching the Fleet in order that it might be free from the difficulties which confronted the Army at the beginning of the late war. He would sincerely and respectfully urge on the Government not to commit themselves to any change in the strength of the Regular Forces without very careful consideration.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) said that the hon. Member for South Manchester began his speech by stating that the War Office scheme was one and indivisible and he concluded by pointing out to the Secretary of State for War that his Party was sub-divided into at least three sections on the subject. The hon. Gentleman who had just spoken devoted his remarks to showing that the hon. Member for South Manchester was entirely wrong. It was not for him to reconcile such divergent opinions or to bring them together. But it was a noticeable sign of the times that the Government were reduced to threatening to drive the Secretary of State for War out of political existence, if he was not prepared to accept unconditionally the Report of the Reconstitution Committee. The Secretary of State for War, speaking in the City on the preceding day, said that he had to speak for seven days in the House of Commons, with the result that he was only able to devote two hours to his office work. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman intended that as a remonstrance against the principle of discussing the Estimates, but it was clear that all the office work for eight or ten months led up to the discussion in this House, and the more complete that discussion was, the more satisfactory it should be to the Secretary of State. He entirely deprecated the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman. The Army Estimates now amounted to £30,000,000 sterling, and they ought to be overhauled every few years from top to bottom and ransacked in order to see where economies could be effected. There was a third part to the Report of the Reconstitution Committee. It had been printed and was in the possession of the Secretary of State for War and other War Office officials. That part was germane, almost vital, to the discussion of the whole scheme, and the House of Commons should be given an opportunity of discussing it. It was quite improper to hang up such an important part of the Report and not submit it to the House of Commons, whose financial sanction was necessary for the carrying out of the whole scheme. The Secretary for State said that so unscientific and inadequate had been the system, that, if the Defence Committee sat day in and day out for six months, it would not be able to make up the leeway. But to what was that leeway due? The Party opposite had been in power for ten years, and during that period one scheme after another was thrown at their heads. The right hon. Gentleman and his predecessors in office were responsible for the affairs of the War Office.

Mr. SPEAKER: That hardly bears on the question of the number of men. The administration of the War Office will arise on another Vote.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he would not pursue the theme any further. He would take up the point laid down by the right hon. Gentleman that they had never considered whether the Army as now constituted was competent to do the work the nation required of it. That affected the number of men. The hon. Gentleman moved the reduction of the Vote by 5,000 men. Had he moved to reduce it by 10,000 men he would still have been justified, and if that Motion were carried greater economy would ensue and the Army would be equally efficient. As to Reserves, there were on the Vote 70,000, or nominally about 10,000 less than before the war, but in reality the number was much smaller. The large Militia Reserve which existed before the war, but which had now entirely disappeared, made the total Reserves, not

80,000, but 115,000, so that the Reserves, the cheapest and most efficient part of the Home Army, had dwindled by about 45,000 men. Under the scheme of the late Secretary of State the Reserves were to have been increased and with the continuance of the three years' service the number would eventually have been obtained, and that would have made up for the disappearance of the Militia Reserve. But the short service system was to be discontinued, and the Reserves would drop again to about 70,000. The right hon. Gentleman held the theory that the Reserves could never be put into the first fighting line.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, N.) was understood to say that he had never made so positive a statement as that.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said the theory of the Continental armies was that when the troops were mobilised the recruits who had had only nine or twelve months service should be left at the depôt, their place being taken by the older soldiers who had been called up from the Reserve. He understood the Secretary of State's view to be that the Reserve was an addition to the existing battalions of the line and not a substitute for the younger trained soldiers of the line battalions. That was a very important distinction, and one upon which the composition of the Army at the outbreak of hostilities would largely depend. The House was entitled to a clear and definite statement of the official views of the Government as to the future composition of the Reserve. In South Africa the Reserve, though looked upon at first with suspicion, proved to be the backbone of the force as long as it lasted, but the Artillery and Cavalry Reserve gave out very early in the campaign. The most difficult forces to create were the Cavalry and Artillery, and he desired to know what steps were being taken to increase the Reserves of both those forces. His last point was with reference to the garrison battalions which, originally numbering eight, had been reduced to five, of which four were stationed in South Africa. These were exceedingly expensive battalions to maintain, costing about £20,000 per battalion more than any other Infantry, and requiring a great deal of transport in consequence of the short service. The provision of men available for these battalions had evidently not come up to the expectations of the War Office, and he desired to know whether these men, who came back to the colours comparatively late in life, and who were not fit for much else than garrison purposes, were to be continued as an integral part of the Army system. He hoped they were not, as the battalions were not only exceedingly difficult to recruit, but they passed no men to the Reserve.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said that as this Vote was the only one upon which any reduction could be effected it ought not to be allowed to pass until the House knew exactly where the Government stood. Moreover, if the present opportunity were allowed to pass without the intentions of the Government being ascertained, it would be impossible to do anything in the matter for another year. Since this Vote was discussed last year there had been an increase in certain troops to which he could not do more than allude, because although they were in relief of this Vote they were paid out of Civil Service Estimates. There were 21,000 troops apart from the military police maintained at a cost of £2,250,000 a year, who were not under the control of he War Office at all, but whose services used to be performed by troops charged on this Vote. Therefore these 21,000 troops had to be added to the numbers on the Vote under discussion and their cost to the money on the next Vote to ascertain the actual expenditure on the Army at home. Altogether it would be found that the Army cost a much larger sum than the Fleet. The Indian Army was an essential part of the Army, and if the Naval, Indian, and Colonial expenditure were added to the expenditure under this Vote, and to the military expenditure on the Civil Service Estimates, the total would amount to the gigantic sum of £97,000,000 for the coming year, including the Military Works expenditure for the present and not for the coming financial year, the amount of which was not yet known. The land forces of the Crown were infinitely more costly than the naval forces, and this was the only Vote on which a reduction could be discussed or any prospect obtained, even for next year, of a substantial reduction of military expenditure. The Government were in a most peculiar position on this question. It was not the slightest use barking or growling at the Secretary of State; he was the wrong man; it was the Government as a Government who were pledged on this question, and they were committed in the most extraordinary fashion. In 1901 they proposed, and after debate carried, a Resolution in favour of the existing military system of which they were now understood entirely to disapprove; they had, in fact, come round to the views of those who criticised and voted against that Resolution. And yet the men the House was now asked to vote were the men required for that condemned system. The Resolution carried in 1901 was as follows—

> "That it is expedient that six Army Corps be organised in the United Kingdom with the requisite staff and buildings."

He could not on this Vote discuss the question of the buildings. It was understood that the Secretary of State approved of the War Office Report in which the Army Corps system was condemned, and a new system substituted, but the House had not yet been able to obtain from the Government a clear and definite statement of their position on the matter. Without going in detail into what had been said on previous occasions, the situation was this:—The late Secretary for War laid the six Army Corps scheme before the House and stated that it had the approval of the Commander-in-Chief. At the time he ventured to express the opinion that it was not Lord Roberts' scheme, but that it was the scheme of the then Secretary of State for War. They now knew that that statement was quite true, for they had seen by the evidence given before the War Commission by Lord Roberts that he only gave his assent to a scheme which he had not seen in detail. They knew now that it was the scheme of the Secretary of State for India. That scheme had since been condemned and a new one had been "assumed," under which it was stated they would be able to reduce the number of men. The Committee said that they "assumed" that the linked battalion system would disappear and the result would be a large reduction on this Vote. The Secretary of State for War had stated that he would make an announcement during the session, and added that he had not changed his view. Undoubtedly they saw a change in the attitude of the Government, but from past experience they had reason to be profoundly suspicious, and they had had no further explanation except from the Secretary of State for War as to the precise attitude the Government were going to take up. He implored the House not to part with this Vote until they had received something like a definite pledge from the Government that they really meant to reduce the number of troops in the Army at home. Last year it was the opinion of the Government that the Army Corps system was expedient, but it was the opinion of the Government now that it was not expedient. Only the Secretary of State for War appeared to have got a definite view upon this question, and Lord Lansdowne maintained the opposite view. Surely they ought not to part with this Vote until they had something more definite than the pledges made by the Secretary of State for War, who did not sufficiently represent the collective opinion of the Cabinet.

CAPTAIN JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.) said the speeches which had been made showed that there was a good deal of divergence of opinion upon this question on the other side of the House. Only the other day the Leader of the Opposition expressed an entirely different view upon this question to that held by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwick. On this point there seemed to be no unanimity at all amongst hon. Gentlemen opposite. There was very considerable feeling that the Report of the Committee should be carried into effect almost in its entirety, and the Service Members had approved generally of the Committee's Report. When they remembered that the Service Members represented a considerable section of opinion on both sides of the House, he did not think an explanation was necessary from the Secretary of State for War as to what the views of the Government were. He thought some notice should be taken of what had transpired during the debate. On the 10th of March the Secretary of State for War rather complained of the tone of the debate, for he said hon. Members had been discussing tailoring, bottled stout, buttons, and things of that kind, and when the Leader of the Opposition found fault with him for saying that, the right hon. Gentleman said he meant that when the Speaker was in the Chair the debate should be conducted on a higher level, because the Committee stage was the proper place to discuss such questions as buttons and bottled stout. Unfortunately the result was that they never got any information about those details at all. He wished to know if the War Office had considered the advisability of getting a large supply of recruits from the Colonies and other parts of the British Empire. The right hon. Baronet opposite had referred to troops which were not upon this Vote, but he understood that they were coloured troops. He had always tried to impress upon the War Office the necessity of trying to induce more men to enlist from Canada and Australia and the rest of our colonies, and he thought they ought to give them greater facilities for enlistment. Some time ago at Malta an effort was made to get the services of the Maltese who formed the Garrison Artillery in order to send them out to India. During the war the garrison battery of Maltese Artillery was sent to Egypt and did very good service there. He thought greater efforts might be made in this direction, for the Inspector-General's Recruiting Report was not very satisfactory reading, and if better opportunities were given to the Colonies he thought they would get more recruits. He thought the pay was sure to be increased. It was a fact that on some foreign stations the pay was more than it was at home. Then there was the question of the impossibility of getting copies of the authorised regulations and books. He understood that the Cavalry regulations had been out of print two years and it was also impossible to obtain a copy of the Service Manual. The Manual of Military Law and other books were out of date and could not be got. He did not wish to go through the whole list of them, but he thought something ought to be done to supply the necessary books and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give this matter his attention. Then there was the question of the drill grounds for the men.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The drill grounds are provided for under another Vote.

CAPTAIN JESSEL said he also wished to refer to the supply of Cavalry drafts for India and he wished to know how that was being managed. He wished to know if recruits for the Cavalry were being enlisted in any numbers for particular regiments. There had been considerable dissatisfaction because the pledges which had been given some years ago in this respect had not been fulfilled. They were told some time ago that a certain number of men would be allowed to be enlisted permanently in a particular regiment. It was easily to be understood that it would be impossible to allow too many men to enlist for a particular regiment; a promise was given that only a limited number of men should at any time be transferred. He noticed that the other day a lot of men were transferred. The whole system wanted looking into and he wished to know how far the pledge given some time ago by the Secretary of State for War had been fulfilled.

*MAJOR EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said that he, in common with some of his hon. friends, had some difficulty with regard to this Vote of men. It was impossible to vote for the men conscientiously without knowing under which system, the old or the new, they were going to be employed. They were giving the Government a blank cheque for these Estimates. He and his hon. friends did so willingly on the understanding that the system which they had opposed was to be radically changed, and, particularly, they all hoped and believed that the Army Corps scheme was gone. If that was not so, then, of course, they were being beguiled into giving a Vote on these Estimates on an understanding which did not really exist. When he spoke on the question of the reforms the other night he said that he thought they were on the eve of being granted, and that the least those who had advocated

Army reform could do under these circumstances was to give the Government all the encouragement and support they could in completing these changes which had been foreshadowed in the Report of the Committee. He was not so confident now as he was then. Several things had happened in the meantime. The Prime Minister had spoken on the subject, and what he said had caused an amount of misgiving in his own mind, and in the minds of a good many of his friends. The right hon. Gentleman said the Government was not bound by the second part of the Report of the Committee either in whole or in part, and further that he did not agree with or associate himself with some of the criticisms which had been made. That statement might mean much or little. It might mean a general renunciation on the part of the Government as concerned any reform or any Committee, or it might mean that the Government differed from the Committee's Report on certain details, or it might mean that they differed with some of the principles which had been laid down by that Committee. He could quite understand that the Government would hesitate to commit themselves straight off the reel to the whole of the details of these great reforms, but that was a very different thing from differing from the broad principles which had been laid down. He should think that the country, and he was sure that this House and the Army, would be glad of a definite pronouncement on this question here and now if possible. The prompt action which was taken with regard to Part I. of the Report met with the general approval of the whole country. But there had been delay, or, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean had said, there had been a change in the attitude of the Government on these Reports. That delay was causing confusion and giving rise to all kinds of remarks and suspicions which, to say the least of it, were extremely unfortunate. Rumours had been heard—and they had appeared in the Press—of Cabinet dissensions on this subject, and it was understood that there was a struggle going on over the dismembered bones of the skeleton Army Corps. These rumours might have a certain basis in fact, as the Army Corps themselves had, but at the same time he thought that the quicker they were set at rest the better it would be for the House, the Army, and the country at large. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean said a day or two ago that those Members of the House who had made so strong an attack on the Army Corps system would, if that system was continued, be bound to continue the fight. He agreed, and he was quite sure that a great many hon. friends on the Government side of the House agreed with the right hon. Gentleman. Their criticisms of the system were derided at the time they were made, but they had been confirmed in the most unmistakeable manner by every authority who had spoken on the subject since, and by all the information and evidence collected on the subject. If their case was strong then, he did not think it was less strong now, and he wished to make it perfectly clear that they would oppose that system now as they opposed it then.

What they wanted to know was whether this Army Corps system held the field or not. If it did hold the field, then in his judgment the road to progress and to reform was very seriously obstructed, and he thought a great many other Members would do their very best to remove that obstruction out of the path. Their votes, therefore, on this subject ought to be profoundly modified by what was going to be done in regard to the six Army Corps scheme and the Report of the Committee generally. The opportunities for expressing their opinions on the subject were fast passing away, but before they were altogether gone he should like to know what the policy of the Government was in order that he might take the action that seemed to him best to put the six Army Corps finally out of their pain. They had believed the scheme, rightly or wrongly, to be dead and buried, and any attempt to exhume that corpse would be violently resisted on those Benches. He could not believe that the Government, having taken the great plunge on Part I. of the Committee's Report of reconstituting the whole system of the War Office, would hesitate long in taking a second plunge with regard to Part II. Any attempt to patch up a system with bits of the old system and bits of a new would be quite fatal. The new scheme hung together as a whole on broad principles, and as such he believed it would be adopted. In the Secretary of State for War they had an ardent and earnest Army reformer, and their desire was not to hamper him in any way. They desired that he should have a fair field and no favour in dealing with the great question of Army reform. The right hon. Gentleman had advantages which his predecessor did not possess. He did not wish to cast any personal blame on the present Secretary of State for India. They would willingly draw a veil over the scheme which he brought forward. What had since transpired—the evidence collected by the Royal Commission on the War, the very strong Reports that had been formulated since, and the policy which had only lately been laid down by the Defence Committee of the Cabinet with regard to the defences of this country—had profoundly affected the entire question, and therefore it was open to all hon. Members, even to those who were committed to the six Army Corps up the hilt, to retreat from that position now in the light which they at present possessed. He hoped that before the debate ended the Secretary of State for War or the Prime Minister would be able to tell the House as clearly as possible what the attitude of the Government was with regard to Part II. of the Committee's Report, because on that attitude their votes to-day and in the future on these Estimates to, a very large extent, would depend.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) said he was not going to deal with the technical questions which had been referred to. It would be presumptuous of him to speak in the presence of experts on those matters. He wanted to say a word upon economy, which was common ground for all civilians and military men. There was not the least doubt among all Parties in this House that the combined Army and Navy Estimates had reached a point the country could not afford to pay. It was only by additional taxation, which was already more than sufficiently high, that we should be able to continue bearing this burden, and he thought there should be some mitigation of it. With reference to men, he had looked up the Estimates to see where the increases had taken place. Comparing the Estimates for this year with those for 1895–6, he found that the total number of men on the home establishment in the earlier year was 116,000 as against 134,000 now. That was a substantial increase. The total number for the Colonies was 36,000 in 1895–6 as against 72,000 now. That was exactly double. These figures showed where the additional men were to be found. It was in reference to the Colonies mainly that the measure of the additional men might be taken. In the Paper showing the distribution of the men, some of the increases were very significant. He found that at Malta the men had increased from 9,400 in 1895–6 to 11,500 now. He supposed there were reasons for that in connection with policy. In the Bermudas the number had been doubled. In Mauritius the increase had been from 978 to 3,605. At Hong-Kong, including Wei-hai-Wei, the increase was from 3,435 to 7,793. They knew the cause of that. It was the escapade—he could call it nothing else—of the Government in connection with Port Arthur and Wei-hai-Wei. And lastly he found that in South Africa there had been an increase from 3,679 to 21,576. The consequence was that, roughly speaking, there had been an increase from £18,000,000 to £29,000,000; and that increase fell on the people of this country. Now, there were two observations he wished to make on that point. First, it was due to politics. He did not wish to discuss now whether the course of the Government four or five years ago was right or wrong. His opinion was as strong as ever it was. But these increases were dependent on policy. It was perfectly certain that the measure of our increased activity in colonial and foreign affairs was to be found accurately recorded in these Estimates. It was well that the people of this country should know that there was a heavy pecuniary sacrifice which came with the acquisition of tropical and semi-tropical territory. It had now become popular knowledge that the self-governing Colonies contributed very little to the Navy; but it had not been pointed out as clearly that, in addition to bearing practically the whole burden of the Navy, the people of this country spent large sums of money without any assistance from the self-governing Colonies on military maintenance for the Crown Colonies of the British Empire, of which the self-governing Colonies enjoyed the advantage. Moreover, exceptional expenditure like that caused by the South African War fell wholly upon this country. These were things which made any reflecting man consider very gravely Estimates of this kind. Whether economy could be effected by some better understanding between ourselves and our self-governing Colonies, or whether it could be done by adopting the Report which had been placed before the country, it was right that the Government should give the country relief from these enormous Estimates.

Mr. ARNOLD-FOSTER said there had been a difficulty in obtaining the cavalry training books owing to the fact that for some time past a new cavalry book had been under preparation, and the old book was out of print. The promise given some time ago by the representative of his Department in the House of Lords with regard to cavalry recruiting had been carried out. A certain number of men had been allowed to enlist in the regiment of their choice. But the attestation papers contained a reasonable provision that if an emergency arose the men might be transferred. That emergency did arise during the war. He was strongly of opinion that it was most undesirable to transfer men against their will except for some grave necessity. During the last few years they had tried several systems with regard to the Cavalry, and quite recently a further change was made which was necessary in the circumstances of the day, but which in itself was to his mind most undesirable. That was a change from the plan of uniting three regiments of cavalry to linking regiments of cavalry in pairs. So long as that system continued grievances must arise, but he agreed that it was most desirable that the necessity should cease to exist. The hon. and learned Gentleman opposite and other hon. Members had spoken on the question of economy. He had said in the course of these debates that he sympathised with that view. He would go further and say that so entirely did he share that view that certainly he should be responsible for making no proposal to that House for the reorganisation of the Army which would not convey the promise of a very substantial reduction upon the Army Estimates. He hoped hon. Members would not press the association of numbers with cost. He thought the question of numbers was to be judged by an entirely different standard. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said that many of the increases in the past ten years, which he had quoted, were due to policy. That was by no means the case with regard to several of the increases. Several of them were due to military considerations and to new military dangers which did not exist ten years ago. He was one of those who shared the opinion that the solution of these difficulties was to be found, not so much in the reduction of men, as in the reduction of men on the active list; that, if they could accumulate a larger Reserve and maintain a smaller force at home, they would have done nothing to weaken the defence of the Empire, but would have made it possible to effect real and substantial economy in the cost of our military establishment.

Some hon. Members had asked him questions about the Report of Lord Esher's Committee. He did not know that he could go much further than he had gone on previous occasions, and he thought the great bulk of opinion in the country would support him in the line he had taken. That line was that it was not an unreasonable thing to ask, before they pledged themselves to carry out the Report, that the Government should have an opportunity of examining it, and that they should not, as his hon. and gallant friend the Member for Stepney had expressed it, commit themselves *verbatim et literatim* to the details of the Report. He did not understand now what was the ground for the view that there had been any change of attitude on the part of the Government in regard to this matter. He ventured to think that the utterances had been perfectly consistent throughout; but he would like to point out, for the satisfaction of hon. Members who had expressed this view, that if they wanted a pledge of the *bonâ fides* of the Government in this matter he could give it to them. He had been asked about Part I. and Part II. of the Report. He should be very slow to say that he accepted all Part II. It was a very dangerous thing to accept anything without examination. He might inform hon. Members that in the first draft of the Report, as it reached him, there was a recommendation which was entirely altered in the second draft. The whole question of mobilisation was then assigned by the Committee to a totally different branch of the War Office from that to which it was now assigned. It was not unreasonable, therefore, that the Government should have the same opportunity of reconsideration as was afforded, obviously, to the members of the Committee. There was another reason why he did not desire to pledge himself at this stage entirely to the Report. There were portions of the Report which were not recommendations for action. There were what he might call the critical portions of the Report, and with one part of the Report he confessed he did not altogether associate himself. He believed that the criticisms of the civil branch of the War Office were unnecessary to the value of the Report, and to his mind they were, to say the least, exaggerated. He had the highest opinion of the Civil Service. He had been brought up under circumstances which had brought him into close contact with the Civil Service of the country for a longer period than most hon. Members had sat in that House, and during late years he had had a much more intimate acquaintance with Civil servants. That being so, he was very slow to commit himself to what he considered to be a too general censure of any branch of the Civil Service, and especially the particular members of the Civil Service who were, he thought, censured in a portion of this Report. He wished to put that fact on record, as he had already communicated his view to those whom it principally concerned. If he were to say that he accepted *verbatim et literatim* this Report, he would be committing himself, which he did not desire to do, to the acceptance of these censures. He had not the slightest doubt that in the financial branch of the War Office, as much as, possibly more, possibly less, than in other branches, there was need for change. He quite understood that. He intended to make those changes; but there was nothing in that to prevent him from entertaining the view he did as to the *bonâ fides* and the admirable services rendered by those who had hitherto discharged duties referred to.

Let him give the House some earnest that he was a believer in the general value of this Report, and that he was desirous of carrying it out. They had appointed their Council. They had appointed their Inspector-General of the Forces. They had appointed their Directors, whose functions were all described in the second part of the Report, and he had already appointed a Committee to inquire into the whole question of the distribution of the forces. Hon. Members pressed him—and he was bound to say, in this matter, he thought unduly pressed him—to make a pronouncement which might be precisely satisfactory to them with regard to the Army Corps question. They knew that he attached no value to the particular name or organisation of the Army Corps. It was an organisation which had never been completed, but he honestly believed that some of his critics, who were usually well informed on many subjects in regard to the Army, had greatly exaggerated the importance of this matter. He did not think some of his critics could tell him what was the real difference between the Army Corps system so called and the District Divisions which were not yet formed. They were voted for alike in the Estimates now before the House. When he went to the War Office the first inquiry he made was, what the difference represented in money; and really the sum was so small that, if they knew it, he did not think hon. Members would put this in the forefront of their objections. As he had stated, he had already appointed a strong Committee to inquire into the details of how they could best carry out the recommendations for the redistribution of the districts in this country made in the Report; but he was sure no hon. Member would desire him, speaking on behalf of the War Office, to pledge himself in regard to the result of that Committee's work until it was completed. It was purely a military question.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL said he wished to ask if the right hon. Gentleman could say when the Committee was likely to report.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that the Report had not been published a fortnight. He had already appointed a Committee, his Chief of Staff only entered upon his work at the beginning of this week, and he must really ask the hon. Member to give him a little time.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL said he only asked when.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he was not a member of the Committee and he could not tell the hon. Member. There was, however, no desire to delay the matter. He had already given effect to the recommendations with regard to the formation of a finance branch, and he had appointed two of the principal officers in that branch and was about to appoint the third. He was sure that that was exactly what the House desired him to do. It was quite impossible to carry out the recommendations of this Committee unless they created the initial machinery, and he had done that with regard to the Council, the Directors, the Inspector-General of the Forces, and now with regard to finance. They had also adopted another recommendation of the Committee. They had already decentralised the office of the Military Secretary. The office of the Military Secretary in the old form had ceased to exist. The Military Secretary now at the War Office had other and less important functions; and a vast amount of the work which formerly passed through the hands of the Military Secretary had, in accordance with the recommendations of the Report, been devolved, for the purpose of decentralisation, to officers in connection with the Army Corps districts or with the Army in the other parts of the United Kingdom not in the Army Corps districts. And, finally, he had commenced with his Army Council a serious and careful examination of the whole of the Report. He supposed there was no hon. Member who would suggest that a body such as the Army Council should pledge themselves to the vast amount of detail which was contained in the Report before they had even read it; and he thought he was doing what any prudent and sensible man charged with the administration of any great office would do, in taking the very first opportunity that had occurred of going through the whole of this Report as rapidly as they could—not with any idea of criticising it, not with any idea of neglecting or setting aside its recommendations, but with the idea of satisfying themselves, how far and in what way they could adopt the Report with the best advantage to the service. He did not know whether that was any earnest to his hon. friends of the Government's sincerity in this matter, but to him it seemed that they had gone the full length that wise, prudent, and sensible men would go.

The hon. and learned Member opposite had spoken of the question of colonial contributions. He thought the hon. and learned Member was right, and that the feeling of this country was growing, and would grow, in the direction he indicated. He believed that, unless there was some greater willingness on the part of the Colonies to share these great burdens, there would be a closer and closer examination by the people of this country of the wisdom of the policy which compelled them always to bear the lion's share. He did not think it was the case that any action that House or the Government might take was likely to change the situation materially. He believed it could only be by the slow growth of public opinion in the Colonies, which might perhaps tend in the direction of showing that they had dangers, and that those who had dangers must take their share in guarding against them. Or it might be—he should not be surprised if they had to recognise it—the growth of public opinion in this country, in the direction of giving expression to the view that we could not for all time carry this burden on our shoulders. The hon. and learned Member suggested that something the Government could do would bring this better state of things about. He was not quite sure that he was right there. If he thought so, he should gladly avail himself of any suggestion which would show how it might be done. He did think, however, that the influence of members of the Government as a whole, of individual Members of the House, might very well be exercised in making this matter clear to the Colonies, but he was not clear that any Executive action on their part was at all likely to bring a satisfactory solution to this very difficult problem. He had said all that any Minister could say who had to undertake such a difficult piece of work as that which was imposed upon him, and he hoped that hon. Members would extend their confidence to him. Further he frankly could not go.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire) said he had just listened to the declaration of policy by the Secretary of State for War with considerable astonishment. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that with regard to the Army Corps question he attached no value to name or organisation. The Prime Minister, speaking in March, 1901, made a very different statement. That right hon. Gentleman told them that the essence of the scheme then put forward was that the Army Corps with which they had to deal should be Army Corps in reality as well as in name, with a proper complement of general officers and staff; a proper complement of cavalry, of artillery and of military units. Two months later the First Lord again referred to the scheme and emphasised the necessity of organising the Army. He (Mr. Black) ventured to ask the right hon. Gentleman opposite was the policy of 1901 still the policy of the Government notwithstanding what the present Secretary of State for War had just stated, or were they to have two voices, not only as regarded different Ministers but of the same Minister acting in different capacities? He really thought the House was entitled to some distinct declaration of the Government. Was it the statement of the Secretary of State for War, who attached no value to the name or organisation of the Army Corps, or the absolutely opposite statement of the Prime Minister which they were to accept? He desired to associate himself with the remarks of the hon. Member for Dumfries both with regard to the number of men and the cost of the Army, and he was not sure that this was a matter with which the Government could not deal. The Secretary of State for War had told them that no action on the part of the Government could possibly influence this question, but what did they find with regard to the distribution of troops abroad. During the last ten years there had been the enormous increase of £10,000,000 sterling. He ventured to submit that the distribution of our troops in various parts of the world was worse than useless, and was by no means a source of help to the Empire. Taking South Africa, for instance, with its garrison of 21,000 men, if we were able to give self-government to that country we could reduce that number to the 3,000 men we had there in 1894-5. That question of retaining the larger number of men was a question of policy and was dependent upon the present Government, but he ventured to submit that the small bodies of troops that we had in other parts of the world were absolutely useless and were a danger instead of a help to the maintenance of this Empire. Let the House observe the distribution. He would not deal with India, and the number of men in South Africa was admittedly a matter of policy, but if the Government could give those Colonies self-government that garrison would be able to be cut down to 3,000 men. But in Bermuda there were 3,100 men; in Halifax, 1,780; in Jamaica, 1,750; in Barbados, 1,550; in St. Helena, 500; in Mauritius, 3,600; in Sierra Leone, 2,600; in Egypt, 5,600; in Hong-Kong, 7,800; in Straits Settlement, 2,700; in Ceylon, 1,800; in Gibraltar, 5,500; and in Malta, 11,500. Was it to be supposed that, if a hostile country, possessed of an army organisation, obtained command of the seas, these small bodies of men at the different garrisons (with the exception of Malta) would be of any possible use in repelling the invading forces. The question he ventured to submit to the Government was whether it was worth while to maintain those scattered bodies all over the world for an absolutely useless object. Could anyone suggest that a good object would be obtained by such a policy? Taking the 72,000 men scattered all over the world at a cost of £200 per man they had a cost of £14,000,000, and when they added £6,000,000 for the cost of training men at home to take the place of those abroad under the linked battalion scheme, they had a total cost of £20,000,000 for this particular class. He desired to suggest the desirability of considering whether for £20,000,000 it was worth while our having 60,000 or 70,000 men scattered all over the globe.

Another matter to which he desired to call attention was one that pressed very heavily upon both branches of the service. It was the desirability of attracting to His Majesty's commission more representative men of the nation as a whole. One would, even at an increased cost, like to see the same class of men take a commission in the Army as entered the ranks of other professions. That could be done at a comparatively small cost. If £500,000 were added to the Estimate, that in itself would secure a fuller representation of the class of men which they wished to see accept His Majesty's commission. A great many more suitable men would join but for the drawback that it was not a profession which men could embrace without having supplementary means. The time had arrived when all officers, especially those of the lower grade, should have their pay so supplemented that a man entering the Army, and gaining a commission, would be self-supporting, as he would be in other professions. In conclusion, he urged the Government to give them a more distinct statement upon these matters than they had yet had from any Member on the Ministerial Bench, and he asked the present Secretary of State for India to favour them with his views before the debate came to a conclusion.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL said he could not help feeling a little disappointed with the speech of the Secretary for War, on account of the very scant matter which it contained. No one wanted to "hustle" the right hon. Gentleman or to compel him to commit himself to intricate proposals which he had not enjoyed an opportunity of properly examining. At the same time, the House should not go to sleep on the question of the Army. The House had devoted a great deal of time to the consideration of the question last year, and naturally was anxious that that labour should not be wasted. He thought his right hon. friend would admit that the conduct of Members on the Government side of the House had been extremely good during the seven days in which the Estimates had been discussed. No one had attempted to make Party capital out of the Commissioners' Report or to assail the Government for considerable errors in administration, though ample opportunities were provided in the Estimates, which had been presented to the House in such a muddle. In three successive years he had listened to a final and absolute reform and reorganisation of the Army. What was the position to-day? The number of men showed a reduction. Policy did not dictate this reduction; it was grim necessity. The number of men had been reduced because the men never existed; and the reduction in cost was very small and illusory. It was pretty well known that the cost of the Army was going to increase next year. The cost of the Army was bound to increase in the future. There was the increase of pay, the increased numbers in the Reserve, the increased expenditure on artillery—for the latter of which the right hon. Gentleman had graciously conceded to India the privilege of paying this year's instalment, but next year's would have to be paid by this country. Therefore, from the point of view of economy, the position of the Army was profoundly unsatisfactory. The cost was far greater than the taxpayers would stand, and he was confident that the House would not rest during the next five years until they had effected a reduction of at least £5,000,000 on the present normal cost.

Nobody would suggest that the War Office should accept off-hand all the intricate proposals contained in the Reconstitution Committee's Report. He would be sorry to undertake to support all those proposals himself, but he believed there was an overwhelming consensus of opinion that on the whole that Report would form a far better basis than the existing system for any future work in the direction of Army reform. After all, that Report had been brought before the House in a peculiar way. He suggested that the Secretary of State for War both saw and approved of the Report before it was issued to the public. Further, the Committee was appointed by the Prime Minister, who had closely associated himself with its proceedings, and he suggested that the Prime Minister also saw and approved of the general terms of the Report before it was published. He really did not think the late Secretary of State ought to regard it as censuring him in particular, for in the scheme he proposed he had the support of the whole Cabinet, and the most particular and special support of the Prime Minister. If the Prime Minister was prepared to sanction a Report which reflected upon himself, surely the late Secretary of State for War had no cause to consider that he was affected by it. It would be unfair not to recognise the many substantial reforms, not only in the condition of the soldier but also in other matters of War Office administration which had been effected by the right hon. Gentleman. It was not so much of his Army administration as its cost that he had had to complain. At the beginning of his career at the War Office the right hon. Gentleman was induced to embark upon a scheme which demanded more men than the recruiting resources of the country could supply, and more money than it would be prudent or thrifty for this House to vote, but he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not consider that in future debates they desired in any way to reflect upon him, or to censure him, personally, for a course of action in which he had the support of the entire Conservative Party. But this new Report appeared to be hanging fire. Everybody knew how keen the Secretary of State for War was on carrying out the Report, and he could not help thinking that the right hon. Gentleman, instead of giving such vague assurances, would much prefer to state definitely and frankly what he intended to do—and certainly the House would rather he made such a statement. They believed that the new proposals had been considered on their merits so far as the policy of their adoption by the Government was concerned. The details of their application might be relegated to another Committee.

The acceptance of the principle of the Report by the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for War had been sealed by the dismissal of the high officers, whose removal from the War Office was considered an indispensable preliminary to carrying out the other recommendations. The House did not particularly want to know what internal alterations were to be made in the War Office, nor was it a matter of first-class importance how the duties of high officials were to be rearranged. Those were doubtless intricate and important matters requiring much careful thought, upon which the House of Commons was incompetent to express an opinion, and which, after all, could be settled by the Army Councillor by the Secretary of State, sitting in his room, pen in hand. But there were other problems which could not be so settled, and it was about those that the House desired to be informed. Were the Government going to keep the same number of battalions in the future as in the past? At what strength were they going to be kept? How were the necessary recruits to be supplied? For what period of service were men to be enlisted? These were the matters on which the House required information. The Report contained a calm assumption that the linked battalion system was to be abandoned. How was it to be replaced? It could not be denied that if the same number of battalions were required at home as abroad, the best system was that which had hitherto obtained. But the same number was not required at home, and it was absurd to keep battalions which were not wanted. The altering of the positions of high officers was not Army reform. What the House wanted to know were the intentions of the Government with regard to the period of service, the conditions of enlistment, the rosters, and the methods by which battalions were moved about the British Empire. When was the debate on the new scheme to take place? Would the right hon Gentleman make, between Easter and Whitsuntide, his statement showing precisely the parts of the Report the Government intended to adopt and the parts they intended to ignore? Until information was given on these matters it was extremely difficult to know how to vote on this Resolution. It was idle to suppose that what had already been done and the vague assurances which had been given constituted any real, definite, or practical measure of Army reform, and he appealed to the Financial Secretary to make a much more definite statement than the House had yet heard.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said he had heard the remarks made by the right hon. Gentleman about colonial contributions with some apprehension. He had always been opposed to the policy adopted of late years by which the Government of this country had gone cap in hand asking the Colonies to contribute towards the Navy. He did not think that was either good policy or good finance, because the amount of money they got from the Colonies was of no account and was not worth the friction it caused. He should be very jealons of any similar policy being adopted by the heads of the military system of this country. Did the right hon. Gentleman want to get money or men out of the Colonies? In his opinion either of those policies would be a mistake. If the Colonies began contributing use would be made of their first contribution to press them for more, and at the same time they would have before them the fact that every 6d. of military expenditure upon the Army in India was borne by India. Even the sending of a distinguished soldier to Japan had been placed upon the finances of India. He hoped the Colonies would be slow to accede to any demands for either money or men for the Imperial Army. A self-governing colony should be absolutely responsible for the whole of its military defence. The Secretary for War appeared to be unusually susceptible when he was told that he had not absolutely said the same thing to-day as he had stated before. He did not desire to accentuate those differences, but he observed in the spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman approached this question a change, and he appeared to have adopted the very wise and prudent advice given by the Leader of the Opposition, when he pointed out the rapidity with which this Report had been put together by Lord Esher's Committee, and the rapidity with which the Government announced that they had accepted that Report. Now the right hon. Gentleman appealed to the House to give the War Office and the Government time to consider the very important reforms he was going to propose. He was sure the House was quite willing that the Secretary for War should have ample time to consider his proposal. The right hon. Gentleman had also taken the advice of the Leader of the Opposition in reference to repudiating the indiscriminate criticisms of the Report in regard to the Civil Departments of the War Office. This was a large branch of the Civil Service, and no one could read those statements without regretting their character, knowing the very small foundation on which they rested.

With regard to Part II. of the Report, the right hon. Gentleman had told them that the officers referred to had been appointed. They had been told that, in substance, the Government adopted the proposals of the Committee in regard to the finance of Part II., and that they had appointed the three principal officers recommended in that branch of the Report. They had also been told that the recommendation, in regard to the change in the functions discharged by the Military Secretary, had been adopted, but nothing had been said as to that branch of Part I., which they were informed had been adopted as a whole. The right hon. Gentleman did not say how far they had adopted the recommendations contained in Part I., with regard to giving a permanent staff and secretary to the Defence Committee in the future. They had in these Estimates a sum of £4,000 for an Imperial Defence Committee. As this was an important branch of Part I., he thought they ought to have some statement as to how far they intended to carry out the recommendations of Lord Esher's Committee by establishing what was a very dangerous official, viz., a permanent secretary to the Defence Committee, to hold office for five years and for subsequent terms of five years, whilst all his colleagues were to serve only for two years. This permanent secretary was to be constantly there to give advice to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for War. They had not had any assurance as to whether the Government proposed to adopt that important part of Part I. With regard to distribution, the right hon. Gentleman said he had appointed a Committee to reconsider this subject. They were going to have another Committee to consider this vexed question of the distribution of the British Army. He thought it would have been much better if the Secretary of State for War, when these Estimates came before the House, had made a clean breast of the intentions of the Government with regard to the Esher Committee's Report, so far as they bore upon these Estimates. If the right hon. Gentleman had taken the House into his confidence and stated that these Estimates would be subject to large alterations upon certain lines, in view of the recommendations of the Report, a good deal of discussion would have been spared. With regard to the character of the Estimates, they were unreal, and this Vote for men was not a true Vote, because they were asking for 10,000 men more than they were being asked to pay for. That was not treating the House in a constitutional manner. The right hon. Gentleman had told them frankly that he was asking for no money for those 10,000 men. That was not a right method to adopt in laying Estimates before the House of Commons. The Estimates now being asked for did not represent either the men or the money, or the individuals or officers who were to receive those salaries. They were not being asked for the right number or the right amount of money, and it was very likely that the money they were voting would be diverted to purposes which were not specified in the Estimates now before the House. That was outrageous procedure, and it ought to be resisted by every means in their power.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) said that hon. Gentlemen opposite were a little difficult to please. The six Army Corps, as far as his limited intelligence would allow him to understand the Secretary of State for War, were practically abandoned.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: Are they?

SIR CARNE RASCH said the right hon. Gentleman would answer for himself. This year the Estimates were lower than last year, and yet hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway were not satisfied. They wanted a Commission to report; they got a Commission, and now they did not like the Report. The hon. Member for Stepney said they did not desire to hustle or hamper the Secretary of State for War, but, if that was so, they took a very peculiar way to show their feelings on the subject of Army reform. It seemed to him, reading between the lines of the speech of the Secretary of State for War two nights ago, and particularly of the speech he gave this afternoon, that he for one had given up the idea of the six Army Corps. That being so, he failed to see what good purpose would be served by hon. Members who, so to speak, were now setting up an "Aunt Sally" for the pleasure of knocking it down. He had a little sympathy with the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Lichfield division to reduce the number of men by 5,000. He did not think that, under certain circumstances, the hon. Member was far wrong. It was admitted that what we wanted in this country was a smaller and a cheaper Army, and the only way to bring that about was by decreasing the number with the colours and increasing the number in the Reserve. If we reduced the number with the colours we ought to be pretty sure that we had something behind them. He did not think that at the present moment we had. Until we got the Auxiliary Forces up to their strength he did not see how we could reduce the number with the colours by 5,000, or any other number. He should have liked to hear more detailed information as to the Auxiliary Forces in general and the Militia in particular. The right hon. Gentleman had deplored the state of the Militia. A force which was 40 per cent. below strength, and which had no guns, transport, and staff, was, as the right hon. Gentleman said a few years ago, nothing but a patent and recognised fraud. The Volunteers were also considerably reduced, and not in a very much better position than the Militia. The Secretary of State for War appeared to be satisfied with the Yeomanry. It was fashionable to put money on a particular horse which was popular in the country. It would be well, therefore, not to say too much about the Yeomanry. He thought the Report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting was of a most unsatisfactory and unfortunate character. He did not quite understand why it should be so. The proposal, last year, to improve the conditions of men with the colours and to increase their pay was all very well, and when it was made he thought it was a long step in the right direction. But unfortunately it appeared, if he might so say, to have gone out at the touch-hole, for they had not got the men. They were increasing the pay, but men did not enlist. The recruits he had seen were very decidedly of an unsatisfactory character. They were told that of the number who offered themselves for enlistment, 49 per cent. were rejected on account of physique. They could not come up even to the miserable standard insisted upon by the War Office. How did the right hon. Gentleman propose to get his Indian reliefs. What Lord Wolseley said the other day was right so far as it went. He stated that we would not get the men required unless we paid them the average wages of the British artisan. But to do so would largely increase the expense of the Army, and until we cut down the number of men with the colours, he himself did not see how we could increase the pay. He suggested that with the view of getting a better class of men the pay should be increased, that more attention should be given to the question of dress, that the men should be better fed, and that provision should be made for their employment after they had served a certain number of years in the ranks. He thought the Secretary of State for War might now state definitely, once and for all, what he was going to do about the Army Corps.

Mr. PRIESTLEY (Grantham) said the prospect of a great Army scheme, which should be in the direction of greater economy, had been held out as a reason why Members should not exercise their votes in favour of economy. But as one who took the good of the service and the question of economy seriously into consideration, he had come to the conclusion that the only opportunity afforded Members of giving effect to their views was on occasions like the present, when they could vote in favour of reductions. Accordingly, he had not the slighest hesitation in supporting the reduction proposed. In fact, he did so with exceptional pleasure, because he thought the size of our Army should be reduced; and he hoped at the same time it would be associatad with greater efficiency.

Major SEELY (Isle of Wight) said the Secretary for War, in carrying out Army reform on right lines, would have his whole-hearted and warm support. The fact that the right hon. Gentleman was at the War Office was a guarantee that reform would be carried through; and that if it could not be done he would not occupy his office. There was also an additional guarantee that reform would be carried out by the presence of the hon. Member for the Macclesfield Division as Financial Secretary to the Department. He would not ask for any further pledges on this question, but he felt sure that if, after raising the hopes of the country to so high a pitch, the Government disappointed the country, the Government would fall. He for one would deeply regret to find the Government meeting with such a fate. The speech of the hon. Member for the Chelmsford Division was a striking illustration of the fact that the differences on that side of the House with regard to Army reform were not so great as might appear. It seemed likely that the action the Secretary for War wished to take would meet with the general approval of Members of the House. It was necessary to see that the day of the paper Army was gone for ever. When they took credit for a man he must actually be there, and he must not be a boy. What was wanted was that the money should be well spent. They must not be young men and old guns, but new guns and old men. What was wanted was real decentralisation, so as to prevent what he had called attention to last year, the issue of an Order which caused the resignation of many Volunteers without its having been seen by any person responsible for it. He wanted a definite answer to the question whether, under the new scheme, the department of the Auxiliary Forces in the War Office would be an independent department—reporting direct to the Army Council, or whether it would be under the Adjutant-General as heretofore. The Secretary for War had said that he wished to take up the question of the Auxiliary Forces in a sympathetic spirit; but if so he must treat them in a different way from that in which they had been treated in the past. He knew that the right hon. Gentleman was determined to do that if he possibly could; and, if so, the right hon. Gentleman would have his most hearty support. He made no reservation of any kind, and had complete confidence in the Secretary for War.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said he did not think sufficient attention had been paid to the very remarkable speech of the Secretary for War. Everybody must have been struck with the difference between the tone of that speech in regard to the Report of the War Office Reconstitution Committee, and that delivered a week or two ago. The Government were evidently flying a flag of distress in regard to the Report of that Committee, which had been put into operation in such hot haste, and the whole proceeding of the Government was, he contended, unconstitutional. The right hon. Gentleman had made three announcements. First, he said that he disagreed with much of the Report—and his tone in that respect was very emphatic. In the next place the right hon. Gentleman said that the Civil Department of the War Office had been treated very harshly in the Report. And in the third place, the right hon. Gentleman said that he would have to appoint a Committee either to translate the Report or assist him in carrying out the recommendations of the Committee. That showed that the Government was rapidly falling into the difficulty which had been anticipated on that side of the House, by their haste in considering the Report of this Committee. In what position were they in? They had only got Parts I. and II. of the Report. The third part was evidently in print, but had not yet been presented to the House. The whole Report should have been presented to the House, and time given for its consideration. The right hon. Gentleman and the Government seemed to have no consideration for the opinion of the House of Commons. Instead of that the House of Commons was treated to piecemeal sections of this Report. The Government had got no mandate for reorganising the Army, and yet they were proceeding to do so on a most complete basis. The Government seemed to him to be in the position of an old, hardened criminal, who was caught once more in the act, and who was hauled up before a Judge and jury. The Judge said, "Have you anything to say before sentence is pronounced?" and the criminal replied, "I admit I am guilty; but I will reform and become a preacher and lecturer on the subject." The House did not want the assurances of the right hon. Gentleman as to the reorganisation of the Army, but the submission of the Report of this Reconstitution Committee, and full time to consider it before new Estimates were taken. The Secretary for War, of course, was in a great difficulty from the indecent haste of the Government. A complete statement ought to be made to the House by the Government as to what they were going to do in regard to the reduction of the number and cost of the Army.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he desired to ask a Question. The eight major-generals seemed to have allocated to them, if he rightly understood the Report, a function entirely destructive of the financial control of the House and every other controlling body in the State.

MR. SPEAKER said that a good deal of latitude was allowed in discussing the Report, but the hon. Gentleman was passing beyond the proper scope of the debate. The question before the House was purely a question of the administration of the Army.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he hoped some sort of information would be vouchsafed as to the functions of the eight major-generals.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield) said that the questions which had been raised with regard to the number of the battalions which were to exist, and the period of service with the colours and with the Reserve were matters of detail, though he admitted their importance.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL asked whether the hon. Gentleman thought he would be able to make a statement before Whitsuntide as to the policy which should be adopted this session; or, if not, when he would be able to make it.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said he should most certainly say this session. He hoped the hon. Member would not press that too far. There was absolutely no desire to keep back from the House any information which the Government had and which could properly be given to the House in order to delay the consideration of this very important Report.

He submitted that these questions of the reorganisation of the Army could not be properly dealt with in the House until they had been dealt with and fully considered by the Army Council. When they had been so considered his right hon. friend would be in a position to make a statement upon the subject. He acknowledged the forbearance of hon. Members on both sides of the House, and especially of his hon. friends below the Gangway. Some of his hon. friends had voted for the reduction of the Army Estimates because they objected to the policy on which they were framed. He quite appreciated that, from his hon. friend's point of view, it might be possible to contend that the policy on which the Estimates were framed was not a right policy. He would ask them, however, to have faith in the Government, and he would emphasise the fact that the presence of his right hon. friend at the War Office was a guarantee that the principles which his right hon. friend had put forward would receive full consideration. While not in a position to reply on questions of policy, he was concerned in obtaining the Vote without any unreasonable delay, and he would ask the House to proceed to a division after a discussion extending over seven days. The Estimates presented to the House were only sufficient to maintain the Army under existing conditions. Whether or not it might be possible to obtain more economic results in the future was a question which was engaging the hourly consideration of his right hon. friend. They on that Bench were greatly encouraged by the action adopted by hon. Members on both sides of the House, with, perhaps, the one exception of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. The right hon. Gentleman did not condemn the Report of the Esher Committee; he pulverised it and denounced it and all its works. He belittled the recommendations in the Report and said the Committee were endeavouring to create a new heaven and a new earth. The right hon. Gentleman said why hustle, why hurry; but the right hon. Gentleman's attitude was absolutely contrary to that adopted by hon. Members opposite generally. He would ask hon. Members to consider that the Estimates represented in the plainest and simplest form the amount of money required to keep the existing machinery running. It was admitted that the existing machinery was unsatisfactory, and that new machinery should be introduced, and a Committee of proved experience and assiduity had been appointed to recommend what that new machinery should be. In the meantime, it was necessary to provide money to keep the existing machinery running, and the amount asked for was the lowest possible that would suffice for that purpose.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax) said he was greatly surprised at the speech of the hon. Member, which had totally misrepresented the attitude of the Opposition with reference to the Report. He had not heard any word in condemnation of the fact of the Committee having been appointed and of their recommendations taken broadly. But it was a very different thing to condemn the way in which the Government had thrown that Report at their heads and taken steps of the most far-reaching importance without saying anything to the House as to the cost of the changes, or whether they related one to the other, or whether they were all part of a whole which was going to destroy the supposed existing system of Army Corps. He thought they were justified in feeling aggrieved, not at the Report of the Committee, but at the way in which the Government had treated the House of Commons in the matter. So far as the first part of the Report went, he thought it was a good one. He was glad to see the War Office taking earnest steps to carry it out; but he thought they ought to have taken the opinion of the House before they took irrevocable steps. Speaking not as a military man, but simply as a man of business, the first part of the Report seemed to him, for the first time, to set the fabric of the War Office on a businesslike basis. He should heartily support the carrying out of the framework of dividing the responsibility; preventing over-lapping, and making the various departments dovetail one with the other. Part II. of the Report contained a recommendation which seemed to him very dangerous indeed—he referred to the total abolition of the civilian financial control over the expenditure of the Army. About an hour ago the Secretary for War told them that he had actually made three appointments, which presupposed the approval of the recommendations of the Committee with regard to finance. If those recommendations were accepted as they stood they would be practically handing the money, without any effective control, to the military chiefs of the departments. It might be possible in the course of years to train a new kind of public servant who would be part soldier and part accountant; but in his limited experience he had never come across that kind of gentleman yet. As a rule, the best soldiers had no knowledge whatever of accounts; and the War Office accounts would be in a bad state if they were transferred from a civilian to a military department. The system might require mending but that was no reason for sweeping away what was admittedly a capable financial department.

MR. SPEAKER: A discussion on the financial arrangements of the War Office will not be in order.

MR. WHITLEY said he understood that the attitude of the Government towards the Report of the Reconstitution Committee had been the chief subject of discussion.

MR. SPEAKER: The question as to the likelihood of the Government adopting a new scheme was discussed, and that involved to a certain extent the question as to how far the Government were prepared to adopt the Report of the Committee. But the organisation of the Army generally is not open to discussion.

MR. WHITLEY said he would accept Mr. Speaker's ruling. He would, however, enter a *caveat* against what had been said by the Financial Secretary to the War Office that they, on that side of the House, had taken an uncompromising attitude towards the Report of the Committee. That was not the case. They had taken up a discriminating attitude, and he ventured to express the hope that no irrevocable step would be taken until the House of Commons had an opportunity of discussing the financial Department of the War Office. In conclusion, he would only say that the number of men asked for would not be obtained during the current year. The reduction of 5,000 men which had been moved, would bring the Vote more in accordance with what it ought to be, and he therefore would support it.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket) said that he associated himself with those who were heart and soul in favour of the Report; but what he wanted to know was the intention of the Government with regard to that Report. The Financial Secretary had asked what they wished the Government to do. They wished the Government to make up its mind as to what it intended to do on this vital point. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman for personal appreciation of the work the Army reformers had done in the previous year in the criticism of Army reform, but regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not expressed that opinion when those criticisms were made, when it might have possibly resulted in further criticisms which it would be difficult now to appreciate. The Secretary of State had given a pledge that on the earliest opportunity he would make a full statement on the Report.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that his pledge related to Army reorganisation and not to the Committee's Report.

MR. MALCOLM said he understood that the statement was to be made on the Report, but if it was made on the reorganisation of the Army that would be a good deal. He desired to impress most strongly on the right hon. Gentleman that the Government must not imagine, because these Estimates had been allowed to go through easily, that those who had pressed for economy and reorganisation were now less in earnest, than before, on this question of reform. There was a good deal of pressure both in and out of Parliament which could be brought to bear to assist the right hon. Gentleman in making this reform if, as he understood, there were internal difficulties which prevented the right hon. Gentleman carrying out his ideas.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 223; Noes, 110. (Division List No. 59.)

AYES.

Aird, Sir John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.

Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John G. Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt.Hon.A.J.(Manch'r)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour,Rt.HnGeraldW.(Leeds
Balfour,Kenneth R. (Christch.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach,Rt.Hn.SirMichael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownagree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt.Hn.J.A.(Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish,V.C.W.(Derbyshire)
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colling, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb,Sir John CharlesReady
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar,SirT.R.(TowerHamlets)
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.Sir J.(Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzroy,Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Foster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon,Hn.J.E,(Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon,MajEvans-(T'rH'mlets
Gore,Hn.G.R.C.Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hon.S.F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton,Marq.of(L'nd'nderry
Hardy,Laurence(Kent,Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R.(Dulwich)
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath,James (Staffords. N.W.)
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J.F.(Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard,John(Kent,Faversh'm
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier,Hon.James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kenyon, Hon.Geo.T.(Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Kerr, John
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson,JohnGrant(Yorks.N.R
Lee,ArthurH.(Hants.,Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long,Col. Charles W.(Evesham
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter(Bristol,S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis(Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell,RtHn.SirH.E.(Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H.(Dumfriessh.
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milner,Rt.Hon.Sir Frederick G.
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray,Rt.Hn.A.Graham(Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hon. M.W.(Stalybridge
Ridley, S.Forde (Bethnal Green
Ritchie,Rt.Hon.Chas.Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Saunderson, Rt.Hn.Col.Edw.J.
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely,Maj.J. E.B.(Isle of Wight
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Spear, John Ward
Stanley,EdwardJas.(Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord(Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent,Col.SirC.E.H(Sheffield
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond,Rt. Hn.Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby,Sir Charles G.E.(Notts.)
Whiteley,H.(Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, A. Stanley (York,E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt.Hn.E.R.(Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Emmott, Alfred
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Haldane, Rt Hon. Richard B.
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Lewis V. (Rossendale)
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leng, Sir John
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
Markham, Arthur Basil
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murnaghan, George
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary, Mid
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pirie, Duncan V.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Redmond, William (Clare)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Roche, John
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (Northants
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Walton, John Lawson (Leeds, S.)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. Warner and Mr. Black.

Motion made, and Question put, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

The House divided:—Ayes, 263; Noes, 59. (Division List No. 60.)

AYES.

Aird, Sir John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn. Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Frederick George
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Mich. Hicks
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Evelyn (Ashton Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dalziel, James Henry
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R. (Tower Hamlets
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin

Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Emmott, Alfred
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants., W.
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets)
Gore, Hn. G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nder
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich)
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W.
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge. Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Horniman, Frederick John
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Jn. (Kent, Faversham
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Joicey, Sir James
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Kerr, John
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Kitson, Sir James
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks, N.R
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Leng, Sir John
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S,
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M‘Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M‘Crae, George
M‘Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Malcolm, Ian
Markham, Arthur Basil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick G.
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Morpeth Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Moulton, John Fletcher
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Pirie, Duncan V.
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Price, Robert John
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Rea, Russell
Reid James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (Stalybridge)
Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green)
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. Edw. J.
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soares, Earnest J.
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edward Jas. Somerset)
Stanley Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M‘Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strachey, Sir Edward
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H (Sheffield
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Walton, John Lawson (Leeds, S.)
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Woodhouse, Sir J T. (Huddersf'd
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S)
Black, Alexander William
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Channing, Francis Allston
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Delany, William

Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Lewis V. (Rossendale)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Lough, Thomas
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Murnaghan, George
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norton Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid.
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Priestley, Arthur
Reddy, M.
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Roche, John
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel, Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Sullivan, Donal
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Young, Samuel

Tellers of the Noes—
Mr. Labouchere and Sir Thomas Esmonde.

SUPPLY [10th March, Evening Sitting].

Resolution reported.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

"That a sum, not exceeding £9,746,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of His Majesty's Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) (General Staff Regiments, Reserve, and Departments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

*Sir **CHARLES DILKE** asked the Secretary of State for War whether he could, without prejudice to the public service, state the names of the members of the new Departmental Committee, the appointment of which he had announced earlier in the afternoon.

*Mr. **ARNOLD-FORSTER** was afraid he had been misunderstood. The Committee was not a Departmental Committee in the usual sense of the term; it was purely a Committee appointed by the Army Council to inquire into a very detailed subject.

Mr. **WHITLEY** hoped that, as this Vote was closured in Committee, after a very short discussion confined to matters of policy, the right hon. Gentleman would not object to one or two Questions being asked. On page 28 of the Estimates there was a curious item of £40,000 as an "additional sum for subordinates employed in connection with the force in North China." Twelve months ago he entered a protest against the manner in which these items came in, apparently without end, years after the conclusion of operations, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would now be able to give an assurance that the last instalment on account of the Chinese War had been paid. The House ought to have a statement as to the total cost of that expedition, and, if it had not all been paid, how much remained to come into account. Another matter to which he desired to call attention was the increasing amount asked for in connection with military prisons. He would have thought there might be a reduction rather than an increase under that head. During the recent war many unfortunate soldiers were condemned to long terms of imprisonment for what were undoubtedly serious offences when on active service, but, remembering the youth of many of the men, and the privations they had undergone before they gave way to sleep while on duty, he thought the time had come when the right hon. Gentleman might very well consider the advisability of remitting the remainder of those sentences. To spend £28,000 on keeping in prison the men we had enlisted was a somewhat extravagant way of getting rid of public money, and he could not help thinking there was room for substantial reduction.

Mr. **BUCHANAN** said the question of Army chaplains had frequently been before the House in former years, and, but for the closure, he would have referred to the grievances of Presbyterian soldiers, when the Vote was in Committee recently. Between 1892 and 1895 the War Office adopted the wise practice of making no difference, whatever outside the United Kingdom, between the various divisions of the Presbyterian Church, but since that date no further appointments had been made outside the Established Church. There was really little ecclesiastical jealousy between the two great bodies. They had divided India into spheres, and had acted together most harmoniously. The same might be said with regard to the Colonies and elsewhere. At Gibraltar there was one Presbyterian Church; the minister was a United Free Church minister, and he had been appointed chaplain to the Presbyterian soldiers of the garrison. That was the practice they desired to see adopted elsewhere. He understood there would shortly be an opportunity of reconsidering the Presbyterian chaplaincy at Malta, when he hoped this point would be borne in mind. Both the Free Church and the Established Church had standing committees to look after this matter, and, previous to 1895, Secretaries of State had consulted those committees from time to time. That was a wise course, but it had not been followed by the present Government. During the recent war the Free Churches were very active in doing everything they could to meet the spiritual needs of Presbyterian soldiers; they sent out chaplains at their own charge, and the only Presbyterian chaplain killed on active service was one of these Free Church chaplains. There was no question that the Free Church was fully entitled to equal treatment with the Established Church, at any rate outside the United Kingdom, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would endeavour to reintroduce the policy which guided some of his predecessors at the War Office. Referring to the arrangements made within the limits of Scotland, the hon. Member said that at the present moment there was not a single commissioned Presbyterian chaplain at any of the depôts. In reply to a Question the other day the right hon. Gentleman stated that the allocation of chaplains depended on the number of soldiers. What was complained of in Scotland was that the ministers who conducted the services were chosen exclusively from the Established Church. The only acting Presbyterian chaplain in Scotland on the Army List was a gentleman now in Edinburgh, and in past years he had had his work done for him by other ministers. With regard to the announcement in the *Gazette* the other day of the appointment of a garrison chaplain in Edinburgh, he wanted to know what the emoluments were. The position of things ought to be inquired into and overhauled with the view to absolute equality of treatment being given to the ministers of the United Free Church and the Established Church.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said he was sorry to gather from the hon. Member's remarks that he rather objected to the appointment of a garrison chaplain in Edinburgh. This was the revival of an ancient office, dating back to the sixteenth century, and he was sure it was a revival which was likely to cause an immense amount of satisfaction not only in Edinburgh but throughout Scotland. There were no emoluments. It was a position of honour.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked if the clergyman holding the appointment would be made a commissioned chaplain.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said the position of commissioned chaplains was this. Commissions were granted in relation to the number of soldiers of various denominations throughout the Army. It had been held that, of the proportion of chaplains due to the Presbyterian body, it was better to appoint them at places—say, for example, at Malta—where the soldiers could not get ministers of their own from other sources, rather than in Edinburgh where naturally there would be Presbyterian ministers able to give their services. He should be glad to hear any views which the hon. Member had to express on that matter. The hon. Member had suggested that all the religious communities should be put on absolute equality. So far as could be equality would be secured for them.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said there was an immense sum spent on generals, many of whom were, he believed, unnecessary. The proportion of generals in the British Army was very much greater than in any other Army in the world. The Secretary of State for War stated that he had reduced the number of generals. He found that while there were fewer major-generals there were more brigadier-generals than before. He understood that was what the right hon. Gentleman meant when he stated that the number of generals had been reduced. Many of the offices now held by generals might very well be held by colonels who were temporarily brigadiers. There was no doubt that the British Army was over-generaled, and that a considerable reduction ought to take place. He hoped the House would get some pledge from the right hon. Gentleman on this subject. He instanced Gibraltar, which had three generals, as one of the places where a reduction might be made. In view of the reduction which had been made in the British garrison in Egypt it seemed absurd that a major-general should be in command there, especially as there were plenty of English officers in that part of Africa who were quite capable of commanding a small force. All the political work was done by Lord Cromer, and, therefore, it was not necessary to have an important military man there because there were what might be called Foreign Office or Civil duties to perform. No reduction could be more properly made than in what was really the ornamental part of the Army. They were all grateful to the Secretary of State for War for the statement he made that he would be no party to any scheme which did not effect economy. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to carry that out, and that he would have the support of his colleagues.

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY (VARIOUS POWERS) BILL (BY ORDER).

Read a second time, and committed.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY (STEAM VESSELS) BILL (BY ORDER).

SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON (Preston): said that this Bill was intended to enable the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company to run a line of steamers from the Ports of Goole and Hull to certain foreign ports. This was not the first Bill which one company or another had passed through Parliament and put into operation of a similar kind, and no doubt he was asking Parliament to do with respect to this Bill what had not been done with regard to previous ones. His reason for doing so was that he thought Parliament might properly consider the question whether more careful provison should not be provided to require companies to set out their rates at the ports, as he thought in each case there was a tendency to go a little further than any Bill went before. He was justified in saying that, in general, the practice of railway companies to extend their operations to the management of large fleets of mercantile steamers was only made where the railway company owned the port from which steamers were to run, and so had practical control of the traffic from the port. The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway were not the owners of either the ports of Hull or Goole, they had termini at those places but there were other lines of steamers already running in connection with either other railway companies or canal companies. Therefore it was quite right that Parliament should be invited to consider whether some condition should not be prescribed in order to prevent the railway company purposely or, as was more probable, inadvertently carrying out this important branch of business in such a manner as to favour foreign producers as against English producers. His object, in his Motion, was to do something to give British producers a better opportunity than they now had of finding out what really the charges of the railway company were. These Bills had usually a reciprocal function to enable foreign producers to bring their goods into this country and British producers to send their goods to foreign countries, but, according to the preamble, this Bill had, for its object, to facilitate the carriage of goods between Continental ports and our railways, rather than the transmission of goods from this country to foreign ports. It was hardly necessary to say that large interests in this country had looked with great suspicion for a long time on the use companies made of the power given to them in the way of favouring foreign trade as against English trade. No doubt the representative of the Board of Trade would say that this question had been disposed of by the Railway and Canal Traffic Act of 1888, which contained provisions to compel the railway companies to divide up their traffic rate and to enable traders, on application to the companies, to see how the charges were apportioned. But in support of his Motion he would point out that many representative bodies connected with trade had asked for an authoritative inquiry to ascertain whether the provisions of that Act were effectual, or whether they should be amended. If an inquiry of that kind were offered by the Board of Trade he would not press his Motion, because that would enable the Board of Trade to do for all Traders what he asked to be done in this particular case. No doubt it was true to a certain extent that this Instruction would put the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway in a disadvantageous position with regard to other railway companies having lines of steamers, but it was desirable to watch the general interest when there was a growing system of railway companies extending their management to great lines of steamships. He had no desire to do anything of which the company might have reason to complain; he grounded his action upon the view that this Bill carried the system rather further than it had been carried before, and it was time to intervene and ask the House only to allow the Bill to pass on the terms of the Instruction. This information which traders sought should be entered in the books of the company so that all who desired could refer to them and not as at present, under the Act of 1888, only after several days notice by a person interested. He failed to see how the railway company could be injured by people who desired to use their railway referring to their traffic rates. It was surely to the interest of the railways to increase, improve, and develop their traffic in this country, and, therefore, to give the information sought. Information on application did not meet the case as was shown by a letter which had been received from the managers of the Caledonian Railway which burked the question altogether.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) asked if it was in order for the hon. Member to discuss the general effect of the Act of 1888.

Mr. SPEAKER said the hon. Member had raised a doubt in his mind as to the validity of the Instruction, because it appeared to be a general Instruction for the purpose of dealing with a matter not peculiar to the railway in question, but with alterations of the law. The hon. Member was now showing what was done by public Act. If the hon. Member wished to amend the public Act he must do that by a public Bill.

*Sir WILLIAM TOMLINSON said he had endeavoured to distinguish this case from others by stating that this system of railway companies starting great lines for sea traffic was a comparatively recent one, and that this had been the first opportunity of considering what ought to be done to increase the stringency of the law.

Mr. SPEAKER said the statute of 1888 to which the hon. Member had referred, and which he apparently wished to amend, contemplated the very case the hon. Gentleman had in view. He would not stop the hon. Gentleman on the point of order, but would merely say the practice of attempting to alter public Acts by private Bills was a most objectionable practice.

*Sir WILLIAM TOMLINSON said he had perhaps in his endeavour to make his point clear pressed his case at too great a length. He hoped, however, he had made the position clear to the House. He begged to move.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said the peculiarity of the case was that this railway was the only one which, not having the port in its own control, proposed to extend its trade in this direction. The only point he wished to mention was that an Instruction of this character was brought before the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture, and it was universally admitted to be for the benefit of the agriculturists. He thought there was no objection to the clause, and there could be no injury done by it to the railway; he seconded the Instruction.

Motion made, and question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill, that they insert provisions in the Bill requiring the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, in respect of any through rates for the carriage of merchandise between foreign countries and places in the United Kingdom which the company make or charge or to which they are party, to set out in their public rate-books at the ports of Goole and Hull, and any ports which may be hereafter established between those places, how much of each such rate is justly and reasonably appropriated by them, or is paid, payable, or agreed to be paid to or by them for (i.) land carriage abroad, and dock, harbour, and shipping charges abroad, (ii.) conveyance by sea, and (iii.) dock, harbour, and shipping charges at the British port, (iv.) conveyance by railway, either by goods or passenger trains, including any terminal and cartage charges, and cartage in the United Kingdom."—(*Sir William Tomlinson*).

MR. FIELDEN (Lancashire, Middleton) desired, as a director of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, to explain to the House the position the company took up with regard to this Instruction. They had not considered whether the Act of 1888 required amendment or not. All they thought was that no case had been made for any special action by this House in respect of this particular Bill. The matter had been referred to a Committee upstairs. which had full power to inquire into all questions relating to this proposal, and the hon. Baronet who moved the Instruction might, if he pleased, give evidence before that Committee. He submitted that the Committee was a more competent tribunal to deal with this question than the House. Following what he understood to be the usual practice where Members were directly interested in a particular question before the House, he should abstain from voting on the Motion.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange) supported the Instruction, observing that the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, a body that had taken a great interest in the matter of railway reform, had considered it and thought it should be passed. In their opinion, judging by the practice of other railways, preferential rates would be charged, in one way or another, on foreign goods to the disadvantage of the home manufacturers. Every endeavour was made to get these through rates analysed, but the railway companies put all kinds of difficulties in their way. The Liverpool Chamber therefore thought it would be a good thing if, in this particular case, a change was made, and the information set out in the rate-book, so that the trader could see exactly how the rate was made up and whether in respect of any component part of it he was placed at a disadvantage compared with other people.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire) said it had been found, in the past, very difficult, on the part of traders, to obtain this information from railway companies, and he himself had expected to hear from the hon. Member for Middleton some valid reasons why the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company should not be subjected to these conditions. Was there any real inconvenience to the company in their being called upon to do what was asked? He submitted that there was not. He ventured to say that this question, if it left the House, would not be threshed out by the Committee upstairs, which was a narrow tribunal which would be apt to be bamboozled by the hon. Member and his friends. The

House, in his opinion, was a far better tribunal to deal with the matter, and under the circumstances he hoped they would pass the Instruction.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars) said on behalf of the Board of Trade he opposed the Instruction. It was very undesirable that an amendment of the general railway law should be introduced into a private Bill, for there was no doubt whatever from the tone of the speech of the hon. Member for Preston that his object was, indirectly, to affect the general railway law if not to deal with this particular railway company. The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had said that the House was a better tribunal to deal with the question than a Committee upstairs. He did not agree with him. This was an extremely complicated subject, and he did not think anyone was really competent to come to a decision that would be of any value, without a complete examination of the subject, and such an examination was obviously impossible under the conditions that presented themselves in the House that night. On behalf of the Board of Trade he objected to the Instruction on principle, as it would, in their opinion, have no practical result. The Instruction proposed that a railway company should be bound to divide its rate under five heads. At this very moment every railway company was bound to divide its rates under three heads, and dividing them in the way necessary under the general Act would prevent complaint just as much as dividing them in the way suggested by his hon. friend, even if it were practicable to divide them in that way. But as a matter of fact it was not practicable. All his hon. friend's Instruction added to the existing Instruction was that they should give the separate dock charges on both sides of the Channel.

*SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON said he did not ask that foreign dock charges should be separated from the other foreign charges.

MR. BONAR LAW said that showed how extremely complicated the question was. By the Railway Act of 1888, a railway company was bound to give the information to anybody interested within a week of receiving the application. His hon. friend implied that the railway companies did not carry out that Instruction. He ventured to say to him and any other Member of the House that if they would give an instance where a railway company did not comply with the Act, the Board of Trade would be only too glad to take it up and see that the law of the land was properly carried out. He heard it constantly asserted in the House that the railway interest there was very strong. His experience, he was bound to say, was exactly the opposite. He did not think he was exaggerating the view of a certain number of hon. Members when he said that, whenever they saw a railway Bill down on the Paper, they asked each other, "Do you know anything about it?" and if the reply was "No" they said "Let us throw a brick at it." The Board of Trade would do nothing to assist railway companies to give the foreigners a preference. But they thought it their duty to protect the railway companies from legislation which would have no practical effect and which would only cause inconvenience and expense.

*MR. MACONOCHIE (Aberdeenshire, E.) said that this was a subject on which he had some experience, and which was of vital interest to the country. British traders were handicapped by low rates for imports from abroad, and heavy rates for exports.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 79; Noes, 103. (Division List No. 61.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Balcarres, Lord
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth, C. B.
Black, Alexander William
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Channing, Francis Allston
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Dickinson, Robert Edmond

Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Fenwick, Charles
Gardner, Ernest
Gretton, John
Hammond, John
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Heath, James (Staffords, N.W.)
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hobhouse, C.E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, John (Kent Faversham
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Lough, Thomas
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Macdona, John Cumming
M‘Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M‘Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M‘Crae, George
Markham, Arthur Basil
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Murnaghan, George
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
Parrott, William
Pym, C. Guy
Reddy, M.
Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Slack, John Bamford
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R (Northants
Stock, James Henry
Sullivan, Donal
Tuff, Charles
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Weir, James Galloway
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H. (Yorks.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir William Tomlinson and Mr. Warner.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Burns, John
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire)
Cawley, Frederick
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R. (Tower Hamlets)
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Ffrench, Peter
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Groves, James Grimble
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Horniman, Frederick John
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop)
Kerr, John
Kitson, Sir James
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N. R
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H.M.
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M‘Taggart
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Toulmin, George
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Walton, John Lawson, (Leeds, S.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E.R. (Bath
Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Colonel Lockwood and Colonel Royds.

SUPPLY [4TH ALLOTTED DAY] [10TH MARCH, EVENING SITTING] REPORT.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [17th March], "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the Resolution, 'That a sum, not exceeding £9,746,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of His Majesty's Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) (General Staff Regiments, Reserve and Departments), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1905.'"

Question again proposed.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said that when the Sitting was suspended he had been discussing item C. He thought that that item could be considerably reduced when the projected reforms came into operation. In regard to recruiting expenses, some of the Militia regiments belonging to the large counties were overflowing with recruits, and he thought that these should be handed over to districts where the population was less, and the recruiting low. There was another item on which a saving might be made, viz., item O, for the establishment of gymnastic instruction. They had now got to a stage when gymnastics had become a fad. He did not mean ordinary extension motions, but the enormous amount of fancy gymnastics on which he thought a good deal of time of both officers and men was wasted, because they were apt to become merely stage performances. He thought that officers would be better employed at drill than in a three months course of fancy gymnastics. All he wanted to press was that there should be economy wherever it could be practised. The country was in great difficulties, although the Government did not appear to realise it. He believed that the Secretary for War, himself, was in favour of greater economy which would not hurt the Army; and he hoped he would secure the help of his colleagues in that direction. He hoped the Army would be rendered efficient and that the country would get its money's worth instead of paying, as at present, an enormous amount for an Army which was inefficient considering its enormous cost.

*MR. LAWSON WALTON (Leeds, S.) said there was a question which arose on this Vote to which some little reference was made on the Motion that the Speaker leave the Chair, and which he thought was worth a little more lengthened consideration. He referred to the present position of the office of Judge-Advocate-General and to the provision made for the discharge of the important duties which attached to the position. The discussion became opportune by reason of the recent death of Sir John Scott, who had acted as Deputy-Judge-Advocate-General for some years, and whose post was now vacant. It was important, while that vacancy continued, that, if possible, some indication of opinion should be given to the Secretary of State for War with reference, not merely to the selection of a successor to Sir John Scott, but, if he should think it desirable, to the whole reconstitution of the office as it was now occupied. The question was one of considerable constitutional gravity. The general proposition he should invite the House to accept was that the post of Judge-Advocate-General ought to be held by some one who was not merely a Minister of the Crown, responsible to the Crown, but who was also directly responsible to Parliament for the discharge of the duties of the office. The subject had been considered by Committees of that House in 1860, 1868, and 1888, and expressions of opinion had been given with reference to the character of the office, the nature of its duties, and the qualifications of the officer selected to discharge those duties. It was now clear that the Judge-Advocate-General was a Minister of the Crown responsible to the Sovereign for the discharge of the duties attaching to his office, and that he held the office of a Privy Councillor in order that he might give advice personally to the King. He was responsible to no other person, and the advice which he gave was given entirely upon his own responsibility. He was not responsible to anyone connected with the War Office. He advised entirely on his own responsibility, being guided solely by his conscientious view of the duties he had to discharge.

When one considered the character of the functions which attached to the position, it became of obvious importance that there should be some practical responsibility to Parliament. In the first place, the Judge-Advocate-General was the Minister of Justice in regard to the Army. He was responsible for the constitution of every Court-martial, and he had to decide whether or not a particular case fell within the scope of military law. He regulated the procedure of all courts-martial, and when they had arrived at their decision, he examined the evidence on which a conviction rested and advised the King on the question whether the conviction should be confirmed or quashed. He also considered the sentence attaching to the offence and gave advice as to whether it should be approved or diminished. In the second place, he was the law officer, in military matters, of the Government, and was constantly called upon to give advice to the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State for War with reference to military duties which touched upon the law. Therefore, in those respects he was in a sense an executive officer combining in his own person *quasi*-judicial functions. His contention was that an official holding such a position ought not to be left responsible only in an indirect and vague way to that House, and that he ought to acknowledge the same measure of responsibility which was acknowledged by every other Minister of the Crown who gave direct advice to the Sovereign and who was responsible for that advice. That proposition had been affirmed by several Committees of the House which had inquired into the matter. Sir John Mowbray, who had very great experience, expressed before the Committee of 1868 the opinion that it would be a great advantage if the Judge-Advocate-General felt that he was responsible to Parliament for every case that came before him, and that it was desirable that he should be directly responsible to Parliament for the advice he gave. Further, he said that the Judge-Advocate-General ought to remain as a Court of Appeal, and that it was advantageous that there should be an individual holding the position of Judge-Advocate-General who would be entirely independent of the military authorities, and who would take an impartial view of every case. That was the opinion of Sir John Mowbray, who at one time occupied the position himself.

He would now ask the House to consider how the office was held at present. Sir Francis Jeune was a Judge of the very highest character. He was invited some twelve years ago to accept this position to which no emolument of any sort attached. He had exacting and absorbing duties to discharge in his own judicial office; but with the public spirit which the House would not be slow to recognise, he accepted the highly responsible task of undertaking the discharge of the duties of Judge-Advocate-General in addition to the judicial functions to which in the ordinary course he was obliged to apply his mind. The discharge of those services without any kind of emolument placed the State under the greatest obligation to the eminent Judge who, at the request of a Minister of the Crown, accepted the position of Judge-Advocate-General twelve years ago. He had had the assistance of a most highly qualified and eminent gentleman, Sir John Scott, who for many years acted as Appellate Judge in Egypt and was afterwards a Judge in India. He was a most gifted and qualified person to occupy the position, and the duties of the office were efficiently discharged for some years by the two gentlemen who held the position of Judge-Advocate-General and Deputy-Judge-Advocate-General. But the objection to the present system remained, notwithstanding the fact that the personal qualifications of the two gentlemen mentioned were exceptionally high. Sir John Scott was now dead and a successor would have to be appointed. But when the appointment was made the House would still be face to face with the fact that under the present system, so far from getting direct Parliamentary responsibility, there was no Parliamentary responsibility whatever, except in some indirect way. The Judge-Advocate-General was not a Member of this House or the other House, and he could not be interrogated as to the reasons which actuated him in giving advice. He was not subject to the censure of this House because he received no emolument; and the House could not express any opinion as to his action. Therefore they had to deal with a highly-placed official charged with the administration of justice in the Army who had no direct responsibility to this House. It might perhaps be said that the Government were in some way responsible for the Judge-Advocate-General. He was quite sure that the Prime Minister would repudiate that responsibility, because he was not a member of the Administration. The Secretary for War was not responsible, because the Judge-Advocate-General advised him on his own initiative; and the Secretary of State had no voice in that advice. The Commander-in-Chief was not responsible except to the extent to which he might adopt the legal opinion of the Judge-Advocate-General, who was thus lifted into a sphere beyond all criticism. He was a Judge and a Judge could not be criticised in regard to his judicial duties; and, therefore, it would be exceedingly difficult for this House to call attention to any advice that he might give. He enjoyed a practical immunity from all Parliamentary responsibility and all Parliamentary censure which was possessed at present by no other Minister of the Crown. That was an unique and anomalous position.

It was a primary rule of the Constitution that every Minister of State who advised the Sovereign should be directly responsible to this House for the advice he gave. That rule was essential for the protection of the Sovereign, and for the efficient administration of all the Departments of the State. The Prime Minister was responsible for the advice he gave, and the Home Secretary, when he advised regarding the administration of justice and the exercise of the prerogative of mercy, was responsible to the Sovereign alone and to this House. Everywhere, it would be found, without exception, that all Ministers of the Crown having direct access to the Sovereign were directly responsible to this House for the advice they gave. It was only by enforcing that rule that they could maintain the maxim of the Constitution, "The King can do no wrong." They had at present a very great anomaly in connection with the office of Judge-Advocate-General. He would ask the House to look at the matter from a practical point of view. It was a gross anomaly that justice should be administered among a large section of the population under military law without any kind of appeal being possible and without any method by which an injustice, however gross, could be corrected. The matter might pass under the review of the Judge-Advocate-General but he had not heard the evidence and merely considered the notes taken at the trial, and after an independent investigation he came to the conclusion whether the verdict ought to stand or not. He might quash the verdict or might reduce or annul the sentence. That was not the function of a Court of Appeal. Every Court of Appeal acted after hearing the parties, but the function of the Judge-Advocate-General was exercised in the absence of the parties and no new facts were brought before him. Therefore, there was no appeal in the ordinary sense, and if a case of injustice arose there was no remedy. Not being a Member of the House the Judge-Advocate-General could not be called upon to give the reasons for his decision, and if the Secretary of State for War was invited to explain, his answer would be that it was not a matter for his Department and that the Judge-Advocate-General was reponsible to the Sovereign alone. There was no appeal to the civil Courts, as decisions had made it clear that the action of Courts-martial however wrong and however perverted could not be reviewed by them. Therefore all recourse by way of appeal to this House or by way of action in Courts of Law was closed to a large section of the community. This was a grossly anomalous state of things. In the rebellion in Canada, in the Jamaica troubles which led to the trial of Governor Eyre, and even in South Africa, where Lord Kitchener had been most ably advised, questions arose as to the administration of the Courts-martial; questions as to nationality of the accused and whether individuals were to be dealt with by military law or whether they should be handed over to civil tribunals. Yet, although all these nice and delicate questions arose, the action of the Judge-Advocate-General could never form the subject of legitimate discussion in the House, because the person responsible for the decision of these questionswas neither himself a Member of Parliament, nor did he receive any emoluments. He reminded the House of a case nearer home, where an officer was tried quite recently for theft of money from the coat of an inferior officer, and the case was retried at the instance of the Judge-Advocate-General. He was not for a moment challenging the propriety of the retrial, he thought it was a right step to take, but, supposing he had not directed him to be retried and supposing that in the opinion of the House a retrial ought to have taken place, how could the question have been raised? He doubted whether, under our present system, even the injustice done to Dreyfus by Court-martial could have formed the subject of investigation by the House; he doubted, moreover, if any case, under the administration of the present law, could form the subject of Parliamentary investigation and criticism, while they continued in the office of Judge-Advocate-General a gentleman who, however eminent and qualified and distinguished he might be, yet lacked the all-important feature and qualification of Membership of Parliament, receiving an emolument as a Minister of the Crown.

What was the practical solution? Well, as he had pointed out to the House, the office of Deputy-Judge-Advocate-General was now vacant, and there was a sum of £1,000 a year in the Estimate which was allotted for his remuneration. There were three offices. First, the Judge-Advocate, whose emolument was nil; secondly, the Deputy-Judge-Advocate, whose emolument was £1,000 a year; and in the third place, there was another Deputy-Judge-Advocate with an emolument of £700 a year. It was pretty clear that Sir Francis Jeune was not able to devote, although he sacrificed much private time and leisure, the whole of his time to the discharge of the duties of this office. It was, however, quite possible at this juncture for some rearrangement to be made without increasing the charges upon the State, quite possible for some provision to be made with regard to the discharge of the duties of the office which would meet the point of the criticism he had ventured to make, criticism not his own, but criticism which rested upon the authoritative expression of opinion of several Committees, and which sought to restore the constitutional condition which ought to attach to this office, and every similar office under the Crown, giving the House a control which, as matters stood, was entirely absent. He suggested that it was quite possible to make the present holder of the office a Member of the other House of Parliament and that an emolument could be attached to the office, so that this House would get direct control; without changing the present tenure, it was quite possible to arrange it on such a basis that they might demand explanations from, and visit censure upon, the present occupant of the office, and this would enable him to answer Questions and publicly defend the reasons which had actuated his conduct. Of course, the other solution was that the right hon. Gentleman might see his way to so reorganise the finance of the Department without any additional burden, as to make some more appropriate arrangement.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said he had taken a great interest in this question for a good many years, and he had made a good many attempts, unfortunately futile, to bring the matter under the consideration of the House. They had a preliminary canter on the subject not long ago, and he made a few observations then; but he was glad they had now a more formal consideration of the whole question, and he congratulated the House upon the fact that it had fallen into the capable hands of the Member for Leeds, who had brought all his legal acumen and learning to bear on the question, which was well worth the consideration of the House. The hon. Member respectfully urged upon the Secretary of State for War to take this golden opportunity of reconsidering the question. He associated himself with the remarks of the hon. Member for Leeds as to the services of Sir John Scott, whose lamented death had placed at the disposal of the Government a considerable sum of money, and which would give them the opportunity of rearranging and reconsidering the whole matter, and, of giving a sympathetic consideration to the important question before them. Of course this was not a part of the question. All he would say was that he had always felt great regret that they had lost touch, grip, and control of very important constitutional business. He looked upon this as a very grave constitutional question, and he thought, in the interests of the soldier, it was of very considerable importance that he should be able to appeal. He also associated himself in every way with the observations made about the Judge-Advocate-General, Sir Francis Jeune. He had considerable sympathy with him. He had been doing this work for a great number of years, and he had been unpaid. He thought he had a great grievance that his services had not been remunerated by the House in a substantial manner. But, as he had already pointed out, they could not discuss Sir Francis Jeune; he was in the serene atmosphere where criticism was impossible. They had lost grip and control of one very important part of their constitutional business. He looked upon the question a good deal in the interests of the private soldier, who was very helpless in the matter. He had no vote and no one directly representative of him in the House who could bring attention to his grievances. Therefore, he thought he, above all men, needed the protection of the highest Court of Appeal which was open to him, and which had been open to him up to a very few years ago, because, as he ventured to point out to the House the other evening, the punishment for military offences was very much in excess of what was meted out to the ordinary person under the civil law. He, therefore, did think it was unfortunate that the soldier had lost the right of appeal to this House which he used to have, and which he thought he ought to have been allowed to retain. He did not want to labour the question any further. They had had the points put before them with very great ability by his hon. friend; and he only rose for the purpose of urging the Government to take the matter into their very serious consideration, taking the opportunity of the present time, when Sir John Scott's unfortunate death had placed money at their disposal, of considering some means by which they could regain their old constitutional control.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said the discussion was now exhausted, except for this interesting and technical point raised by the hon. Member for Leeds. He had no quarrel with him for having introduced the question or for the remarks he had made in support of his views. He associated himself with all that he had said of the learned Judge who had so long undertaken this onerous office without any remuneration for public work carried on during twelve years; and he thought it was a thing upon which they might reflect with some satisfaction, that since Sir Francis Jeune at His Majesty's request had accepted the office, there had been no case, as far as he could remember, brought before the House where his decision had been impugned. He was inclined to agree with the hon. Member as to the substance of his arguments. He was himself very much struck when he first took up his present duties by the apparent anomaly which the constitution of this office at present presented. The hon. Member had pointed out that they were in this situation, that an office, which for many years had been occupied by a person who was responsible and amenable to Parliamentary control, had now been removed entirely outside the scope of Parliamentary authority, in consequence of the fact that it was now held by a Judge of the High Court, who could only be removed from his office by an Address from both Houses to the Crown; and of course he had indicated a way of exit from this dilemma by which the present holder of the office might come under Parliamentary criticism, and, if necessary, Parliamentary censure; but this would not remove the ground of his objection. He thought they were bound, in view of the opportunity which had arisen and to which the hon. Member for Aberdeen had referred, to take into consideration the future of this office, and, though he should deprecate any hasty action in the matter, he did not think this was any reason why they should not lay down some principle as to their future action, pretty clearly. He would not go to the lengths of the hon. Member in defining the duties of the office in the future, and he thought the hon. Member had gone a little too far, further than was necessary for the purposes of his argument, in pointing out that there was no appeal from the decision of the Judge of the High Court. There was no appeal in many cases from the decision of Judges of the High Court, apart from the Judge-Advocate-General. He supposed there were many cases where the decision of a Judge was absolutely final and where, if there was an appeal, it was certainly not an appeal to this House.

MR. LAWSON WALTON: In every case in which a Judge acts he decides after hearing the parties and arguments, but the Judge-Advocate-General decides without hearing the parties or arguments.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he appreciated the distinction, but he understood the point the hon. and learned Member alluded to was that they ought to have an appeal to this House. He certainly should not readily consent to any judicial person's acts being made the subject of review in the House. He could not recollect, and probably even the hon. and learned Member could not give him an example, of an attack having been made in the House upon any Members who had formerly held the office, on the ground that they had given an incorrect judicial decision or they had incorrectly used their discretion. He did not desire, and he thought it would be most unfortunate for the Army, that the House should be made a Court of review of decisions. He thought, however, that the office ought to have consideration, with the object of changing at an early opportunity the character of it. He was not quite sure that the change which the hon. Member seemed to think best was really the best or was the only one. He thought he was correct in saying that the procedure which the hon. Member suggested had never been suggested in the Royal Navy, and he did not know that there had been any public censure of the administration of justice in the Courts-martial in the Navy; quite the contrary. He thought they should consider whether it would not be better to create a judicial officer who would hold the position of Judge-Advocate-General to the Army and who would be the legal adviser of the War Office. Of course, that would give the hon. Member and others the opportunity of criticising any action which was considered to be improper, because criticism would then be directed to the representative of the War Office and not to the actual person who had exercised his discretion to the best of his ability. The office of Judge-Advocate-General, as he understood it, was twofold. They entrusted certain very important powers to the officers of the Army under very strict limitations, and as long as their duties were performed strictly within the terms under which they were confided to those who exercised them, they were content to accept the discretion of the officers; but the Judge-Advocate-General existed to protect the Courts from the illegality of exceeding their statutory powers, and his advice was also important for the protection of the person under trial, and it was most necessary that the liberties of soldiers exposed to this somewhat Draconian code should be strictly safeguarded. These were the duties the Judge-Advocate-General had to fulfil, and he was not by any means convinced that they might not be more effectively fulfilled by a judicial officer whose whole time was given to the duties, rather than by gentlemen of eminence, like those Judge-Advocates who formerly sat in the House of Commons, whose acquaintance with the Army was comparatively limited, and who were compelled to depend upon deputies for nearly all the business they did in the House. If the hon. Member would be content to leave the matter there, realising that he agreed with him on the principle, that he would take counsel as to the application of the principle, and that, while recognising the invaluable services rendered by the present holder of the office, he was of opinion that the tenure and the character of the office might be modified in the future, the discussion would have been advantageous to all parties concerned.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) agreed that this was a very intricate and complicated business, and nothing ought to be done in a hurry. He was responsible for the first appointment of Sir Francis Jeune to the office which he had held with so much advantage to the country and honour to himself. At that time the position had got into a tangle, and there appeared to be no way out of it except to appoint a man of high position and great dignity and ability to fulfil the duties for a time and to give an opportunity for the consideration of the whole matter. But it was never contemplated that this provisional arrangement should go on for twelve years, and it would not have gone on for twelve months even but for the confidence which everyone felt in this distinguished Judge. But he was of opinion that some remedy ought now to be applied. The present arrangement was not satisfactory in itself, because it was not seemly that a Judge should also be, in a sense, an Executive officer mixed up with administration. He had heard a great many suggestions made. One was that a third law officer of the Crown should be appointed, who would assist the Government in their legal business, to the relief of the other law officers, and who should be rewarded from that inexhaustible fund represented by the emoluments of the existing law officers. There were many ways in which an arrangement might possibly be made. But the great matter was to have at the head of this office an independent person of sufficient authority and independence to retain the confidence of the Army. He did not think that this independence was increased if they tried to mix up a *quasi*-judicial office with administrative functions or with a connection with any Department or Government of the day. But the person selected ought not to be an unknown or obscure person. He ought not to be a man destitute of knowledge of law, or wanting in the qualities of tact, discretion, and independence. The right hon. Gentleman had promised to give the whole matter his consideration, and he hoped he would be able to place the arrangements on a better and a permanent footing.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said it was of first-class importance that there should be at the back of all Court-martial work a civilian of undoubted legal knowledge as the ultimate Court of Appeal by which a soldier's case might be reviewed quite apart from any military prejudice whatever. He strongly urged, however, that nothing would be more unfortunate or disastrous than any arrangement under which the findings of Courts-martial could be made the subject of Party wrangling in this House. Nothing more subversive of the discipline of the soldier, and of the good management of Courts-martial could be conceived than the idea that, as soon as a grievance was alleged, electioneering and wire-pulling considerations should come into play.

Question put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY [1ST MARCH].

Resolution reported.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

"That 131,100 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard services for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905, including 20,656 Royal Marines."

Resolution agreed to.

Resolution [this day] from the Committee of Supply read—

"That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 227,000, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

Ordered, that leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide, during twelve months, for the discipline and regulation of the Army; and that Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster, Mr. Pretyman, and Mr. Bromley Davenport do prepare and bring it in.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

"To provide, during twelve months, for the discipline and regulation of the Army," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 132.]

SUPPLY [2ND MARCH].

Resolution reported.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

"That a sum, not exceeding £6,691,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the expenses of wages, &c., to officers, seamen and boys, coast guard, and Royal Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

Resolution agreed to.

SUPPLY [3RD MARCH.]

Resolution reported.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904–5.

"That a sum, not exceeding £1,634,200, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other Charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1905."

Resolution read a second time.

MR. WHITLEY said that when they were in Committee upon this Vote he asked the hon. Gentleman in charge of it several questions, to which he was not able to give an answer at the time, and he promised to circulate and send to him personally some information on the points he raised. Apparently the hon. Member had overlooked that matter, because he had not yet received the promised explanation. One of the points he inquired about was on page 133 of the Estimates, where he drew attention to a discrepancy in the figures, for it would be found on that page that the pay did not correspond to the number of officers concerned, especially in regard to civil engineers and assistant surveyors. It was rather remarkable that whilst there was a reduction in the numbers there was an increase in the pay of £100. He hoped the Government would explain that point. The totals given in that column did not add up correctly and there must be some discrepancy on that page. There were several other items which were not discussed in Committee because the closure was moved. An explanation had been promised him before the closure was moved in regard to items on page 138 which dealt with the cold meat store at Gibraltar. Last year the amount for this purpose was £15,000, but this year the amount put down was £38,500. This building, he understood, was originally built as an ammunition store, and was found unsuitable, and so it was changed into a cold meat store. He wished to know how it was that this had become such a costly undertaking. On page 140 there was an item for the Haslar Hospital, which had increased from £20,000 to £22,500. There was another extraordinary increase on page 142 for the accommodation on shore of boys' training establishments. Last year this item was £100,000, but this year it had increased to £450,000. He protested against the practice of putting down comparatively small sums one year and then, without any explanation or authority from the House, after having got in the thin end of the wedge, gradually, year by year, raising the figures to what were really large undertakings. The Admiralty ought to come to the Committee and obtain authority to begin these undertakings, and then the House could give its sanction or not. This Vote was the worst in the whole of the Estimates for this fault. Year after year they went on voting these large sums blindfold, and that was the manner in which the Navy Estimates had been brought up to such an immense sum. On page 143 the Naval Ordinance Stores accommodation had been put down at £57,030, whilst last year it was only £23,600. He understood that this expenditure was to be shared between the Admiralty and the War Office, but was this not done last year? Upon great Votes like these Estimates contained, he thought they ought to have some systematic method of putting them plainly before the House. These were all questions of great importance, and in order to protest against this method of continually raising the Estimates he begged to move a reduction of this Vote by £1,000.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the sum of '£1,634,200,' and insert the sum of '£1,633,200'"—(*Mr. Whitley*) —instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That '£1,634,200' stand part of the said Resolution."

MR. BLACK said he desired to support the reduction which had been moved by his hon. friend, but he did so on somewhat different grounds. He did so in order to draw attention to the way in which the Admiralty failed to apprehend the real interests of the works they undertook. At the initiation of a local minister in the North-east of Scotland the Admiralty undertook the construction of a Naval Reserve battery in the middle of one of the largest resident fishing populations in the British Isles on the coast of Banffshire. As matters stood at present fishermen were seldom induced to join that branch of the service. The Admiralty apprehended the situation and agreed to place a Naval Reserve battery at that spot and there appeared last year a sum of £3,500 in the Estimates for the erection of a Naval Reserve battery at Buckie. Up to this point the Admiralty took a correct view of the situation, but when they came to negotiate for the ground required which was most suitable for the purpose, they were met by a difficulty because the proprietor declined to part with it. The Admiralty might have put into force their compulsory powers to acquire the ground, or they might have moved their battery some small distance from this locality. The whole idea of this battery was that it might be in the midst of a seafaring population, whom it was desired to attract. But the Admiralty chose a most futile and useless course, for instead of placing this Naval Reserve battery in the middle of a large resident seafaring population, they had gone away for a distance of twenty miles, and placed it in the midst of a small fishing population. At the place originally selected there was a population of 4,000, whilst the population of the place chosen was only some 400 or 500, and therefore, there was little prospect of this battery proving of any great service to the Navy. He hoped they would have some explanation of this error of judgment in not putting into force their compulsory powers. They could not have acted in this matter from motives of economy, because even under compulsory powers £10 per acre would be a very ample allowance. That represented about £2,500 and surely for this it was worth while to have adopted compulsory powers. He hoped they would be given some satisfactory explanation of this matter.

He also desired to call attention to the position of the new naval base at Rosyth. It was a matter of great importance, when the Admiralty were proposing to lay out a town, that they should, if possible, build a garden city. [An HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!] Did the hon. Member opposite object to garden cities? He thought Rosyth ought to be made as attractive and healthy as possible for the Government employees and others who would have to reside there, and this was a unique opportunity for making it a garden city. They had acquired at this place some 1,200 or 1,300 acres for a new naval base, and it had occurred to many persons that the Government had an opportunity now which he hoped they would not neglect of laying out the town in such a way that it would have boulevards and plenty of open spaces so as to prevent the evil of overcrowding which had occurred at Devonport. He thought some explanation was due to the House in regard to the very large cost of the site at Rosyth. The net rental of the land was £1,200, and they had ascertained that the Government had paid £140,000 for it, or about 100 years purchase. He had inspected the site himself, and he ventured to assert that there was no building value in the site, and the true criterion was what would they get for it if they put up this land for sale and abandoned their idea of making it a naval base. In that case he did not think they would get more than £40,000 for what they had paid £140,000. That indicated very great extravagance, and he had not heard any satisfactory explanation of it. He was not aware that any great progress had been made with the works at Rosyth, and he wished to know when a serious beginning was going to be made. He hoped a satisfactory explanation of those points would be given.

MR. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock) thought something ought to be done to secure the use of Dartmoor granite for the Portsmouth extension works instead of importing granite from Norway. They had been told on good authority that there was granite enough at Dartmoor to build ten Londons. Dartmoor granite was now being sent to build London bridges, and it did seem an injustice to the locality that the Admiralty should be bringing granite all the way from Norway for the extension of these works. In Devonshire there was scarcely any local industry, and recently these granite quarries had been largely developed. Considering that native granite could be supplied as cheaply as any other granite he thougth those who contributed to the taxes of this country were entitled to more consideration. If Dartmoor granite could be supplied as cheaply and without injury to the public service he thought this ought to be done instead of going all the way to Norway for it.

MR. BUCHANAN said there were two or three subjects which remained over when they discussed this Vote in Committee which had not been mentioned. With regard to Rosyth, they had been promised information, but they had not been told anything as to the progress of these works, and they had had to fall back for information upon a lecture delivered at the Surveyors' Institute with regard to the Rosyth works. It appeared from the speech delivered by Mr. Binnie that not only had the Government to pay a large sum for the land in the first instance, but they had also to pay a further sum for mineral rights which were not likely to be worked. They had also been informed that there had been some difficulty in regard to buying up the agricultural leases. They had been forced to derive their information from all sorts of stray authorities such as rectors and surveyors, and he thought they had a right to demand full information either in the Memorandum of the First Lord of the Admiralty or from the Civil Lord as to what was being done with regard to this dockyard. He understood that things were almost at a standstill now at Rosyth. There were one or two other matters which were left over when the closure was moved. Some of the items had gone up by leaps and bounds. The accommodation of naval cadets at Osborne had increased from £40,000 to £160,000, and at Singapore an item of £23,000 had increased to £57,000. There were other points upon which he would not detain the House, but he trusted that the points which had been mentioned would be dealt with.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said he desired to ask a question with regard to the Coastguard stations at West Bay in Dorsetshire. He did not think this was a suitable place at which to spend £4,000, because the population was by no means large. He happened to see the accommodation there some little time ago, and it was not in accordance with the needs of the place. He thought they ought to have some explanation from the hon. Member in regard to the expenditure proposed at this place. With regard to the payment of advances under the Naval Works Acts he noticed that this expenditure had gone up by more than £140,000. Like expenditure under the Military Works Acts this expenditure increased every year, and this was a very unsatisfactory feature in both the Naval and Military Estimates. The capital expenditure was not put down here, and he ventured to think that before they passed this Estimate lightly they ought to have some statement, not only as to what the total expenditure was likely to be, but also as to what it would be next year. They ought to have some indication given as to finality in regard to this expenditure.

*THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARTHUR LEE, Hampshire, Fareham) said he desired to express his regret to the hon. Member for Halifax for not having been able before this to supply him with the amended copy of page 133, which he promised him during the Committee stage. He was sure the hon. Member would acquit him of any desire to deprive him of that information, but he had only received a proof of the amended copy that afternoon, and he intended handing it to the hon. Member before the debate took place, had it been possible. The hon. Member would find in the amended copy all the points he had raised cleared up, and when printed it would be laid upon the Table of the House. The hon. Member for Halifax had also referred to the increase in the Estimate from £20,000 last year to £22,500 this year for the adaptation of the Haslar Hospital building. It was always difficult to foresee the exact expenditure that would be required to adapt an old building and bring it up-to-date. It had been found that the floors were not in such a good state as had been expected, and therefore it had been found necessary to renew them. Consequently, an additional expenditure of £2,500 had to be incurred. The hon. Member had also referred to item GG., which related to accommodation on shore of boys' training establishments. He agreed with the hon. Member that some explanation was necessary of the large increase in that item. Last year the amount was £100,000, but that was only to provide for one of the training ships on shore, and it was never intended that that should be the end of the policy of accommodating these boys in barracks on shore. He could defend this policy, very easily, in the first place by pointing out that it was extremely economical to transfer these establishments to the shore. As to the question of hulks, as compared with barracks, the latter were much superior from a sanitary as well as from a financial point of view. He thought that the economies achieved justified the expenditure. It would perhaps interest the House to hear that on working out the cost of maintenance of the structures of these hulks, as compared with barracks on shore, the former cost £7 per boy per annum, whilst the latter cost only 30s. per boy. The total saving effected by these four establishments would amount to about £30,000 a year in actual maintenance and repairs alone. He thought the House would see that that in itself was sufficient to justify the capital expenditure on these barracks, even if the hulks were capable of continuing the work for many years longer. As a matter of fact however, these hulks which it was proposed to replace were not in a satisfactory condition. They were insanitary, and they could not be repaired to carry on the necessary work. Therefore the Admiralty were confronted with the alternative of either preparing new hulks, which would have been a costly business, or of providing barracks on shore. The House was aware that there were many advantages in accommodating the boys on shore. They were able to be better trained, there was more space, and they were able to sleep in beds instead of hammocks, which was a good thing for growing boys. He thought this policy was desirable from every point of view, and he hoped he had been able to indicate that it was an economical policy. It was not proposed at present to build all four of these training establishments. It was only proposed to provide two at present, one at Shotley and the other at Queensferry, because the training ships at those places were in such a parlous condition that it was absolutely necessary to provide other accommodation for the boys. The total sum put down in the Estimate would not be required immediately, but the Admiralty felt that it would be more straightforward to tell the House at once the total extent of this policy, and let them know what was ultimately proposed to be done.

Reference had been made to two items somewhat similar in their character, the cold meat store at Gibraltar and the ordnance buildings at Singapore. There was no increased cost in these items, although he admitted that this was not clearly shown on the Estimate. The explanation was really very simple. These were services which were being jointly paid for by the Army and Navy. Last year only the Admiralty portion of the Vote was shown. This year the total was shown, but the amount to be provided for on Navy Votes had not increased. Last year it was explained in a footnote that half of the expenditure on the work was chargeable on the Navy Votes and the other half on the Army Votes.

Mr. WHITLEY: Why is the meat store so costly ?

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE said the buildings were large, and difficult of construction, and the hon. Member was aware that it was necessary in the case of a fortress like Gibraltar to make larger preparation for the storage of food than at a station in this country.

The question whether a Reserve Battery should or should not be erected at Buckie had been carefully considered, but the Admiralty found that it was impossible to obtain a site there. The local landowners refused to give a site. The hon. Member for Banffshire would remember that a pledge had been given to him that the whole of the proceedings should be suspended for several weeks, to give him an opportunity of negotiating in the matter. He failed in those negotiations, and the Admiralty failed to persuade the local landowners to part with their property. The only other alternative was to proceed by compulsory powers.

MR. BLACK: Hear, hear.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: The hon. Member said "hear, hear," but he could assure him that the Admiralty, acting on the advice of their legal advisers, decided that it would be most unwise to proceed by compulsory powers in the matter of establishing a firing battery. It was difficult to foresee how far there might be deterioration of surrounding property or what might be the extent of the claims for compensation in the case of a firing battery being established. They had heard of cases in which people living miles away had made claims for compensation on the ground that their nerves were shattered by the sound of the guns.

MR. BLACK: Will that not apply equally to the site that has been chosen?

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said there was not the same objection at the place selected. The town council had afforded the Admiralty every opportunity for securing a suitable site. He did not say that the site chosen was altogether as good as the other, but it was suitable, and the work would now be proceeded with.

The question of forming a garden city at Rosyth was fully discussed last year. The hon. Gentleman was told that the Admiralty was sympathetically inclined to the proposal to have a model city in the neighbourhood of Rosyth, but they were not themselves prepared to build a garden city for the accommodation of the workpeople in the dockyard. All they would do was to see whether any land was available for workmen's dwellings after meeting all the requirements of the dockyard, and, if there was, they would encourage the erection of buildings there with due regard to hygienic considerations, space, and so forth. When the time came for building, the Admiralty would be willing to confer with gentlemen who were interested in this idea of a garden city. In reply to the question as to when the dockyard works would be commenced, all he could say at present was that they would be commenced as soon as the scheme of the proposed dockyard had been fully determined. Hon. Gentlemen must not think that the laying out of a first-class dockyard could be settled in a few days, or even a few months. In the first place it was necessary to make a very elaborate examination of the ground. It was necessary to make most careful borings in order to determine the best sites for docks and other structures, and that work had been pressed on with the utmost vigour during the past year. In addition to that it had been decided to send the superintending engineer to inspect the most modern dockyards on the Continent in order that we should have the advantage of the latest and most scientific ideas on this subject. He could assure the hon. Gentleman that there was no undue delay whatever, and the report that the works had been stopped was absolutely untrue. This was a matter that must not be gone into headlong and without due consideration. The hon. Member for the Lichfield Division had referred to the item of "Rents" which was made up of a number of small sums, and he was afraid that he could not give him details at present, but he should be very glad to give him, personally, the information he desired. The hon. Member for East Perthshire asked about the Coastguard item. He had dealt with that matter fully on the last occasion the Vote came up for consideration. He might repeat that the policy now adopted would effect a saving because by building Coastguard stations on loan they would be relieved of the enormous sums which they had to pay for rents of buildings which were in many cases unsuitable. The hon. Member for East Bristol had said that the Coastguard station at West Bay was unnecessary. The hon. Member was entitled to his opinion, but he could only reply that in the opinion of the responsible advisers of the Admiralty in this matter, it was a necessary station. The hon. Member also asked a Question as to the repayment of annuities under sub-head Q. It was always unpleasant having to pay one's debts, but it was the fate of solvent debtors, such as he hoped the Admiralty would always prove to be, to have to pay back the money they borrowed. As these works to which the annuities referred were carried out with the full assent of Parliament it was obvious that the charges must be met.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 157; Noes, 52. (Division List No. 62.)

AYES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A.J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn. Gerald W. (Leeds
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A (Worc.
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H.A.E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dewar, Sir T. R. (Tower Hamlets)
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. G. H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster Henry William
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, Maj Evans-(T'r H'mlets
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(Salop
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry)
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords. N.W.
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, John (Kent, Faversham
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N.R
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick G.
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Ridley, Hon. M. W. (Stalybridge)
Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)

Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seely, Maj.J.E.B.(Isle of Wight
Spear, John Ward
StanleyEdward Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M
Stock, James Henry
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whiteley, H.(Ashton und Lyne)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson John (Glasgow)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E.R.(Bath)
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

Tellers for the Ayes—
Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork,N.E.)
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Ffrench Peter
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. HerbertJohn
Hammond, John
Harcourt, LewisV.(Rossendale)
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol,E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire)
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
Markham, Arthur Basil
Murnaghan, George
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Mara, James
Reddy, M.
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Spencer, Rt.Hn.C.R.(Northants
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, DavidAlfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer

Tellers for the Noes—
Mr. Whitley and Mr. Buchanan.

Resolution agreed to.

Adjourned at four minutes after Twelve o'clock.

[APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

MEMORANDUM OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR RELATING TO THE ARMY ESTIMATES FOR 1904–05.

COMPARISON WITH ESTIMATES FOR 1903–04.

The total number of men to be voted is 227,000, and shows a decrease of 8,761 as compared with the numbers voted for 1903–04.

Of this decrease, 4,200 is due to the increased garrison of South Africa being found in 1904–05 within the ordinary establishments, instead of being provided for by a vote of temporary additional numbers, as in 1903–04.

The balance of 4,561 is due to decreases on the Field Artillery, owing to the transfer of three batteries to the Indian Establishment and on the Infantry, owing to reductions in the establishment of regiments of Foot Guards (except the Irish Guards), and of Infantry of the Line at home and in South Africa. The establishment of the Royal Garrison Regiment has also been reduced from eight battalions to five battalions and a depôt. On the other hand, there are small increases in the Royal Army Medical Corps and the Army Pay Corps.

The Army Estimates (including the Ordnance Factories Vote) for 1904–05 amount to 28,900,000*l.* as compared with 34,500,000*l.* the total of the original estimate for 1903–04, a decrease of 5,600,000*l.*, or of 8,300,000*l.* if the Army Supplementary Estimate of 11th February for 2,700,000*l.* is taken into account.

Limiting the comparison to original estimates, the main reductions for extraordinary services are—

	£
(*a.*) Mowatt reserves of stores	1,750,000
(*b.*) South Africa—including compensation claims and other charges	3,070,000
(*c.*) China and Somaliland	500,000
	5,320,000

But against these reductions there must be set various increases which have to be provided for, viz. :—

	£
(*a.*) The grant of "Service" pay	750,000
(*b.*) Growth of Army Reserve	210,000
(*c.*) Military Works Acts annuities	98,000
(*d.*) Militia—full number of battalions training ...	70,000
Total	1,128,000

The above increases have been met, and a further saving of 280,000*l.* effected as follows:—

		Saving. £.
1.	Reduction of Establishment of Foot Guards by 94 men per battalion	50,000
2.	Reduction of Establishment of Infantry of Line at home by 50 men per battalion	175,000
3.	Discontinuance of enlistment into the Militia Reserve	100,000
4.	Reduction of Vote for Ordnance Factories ...	185,000
5.	Reduction in Vote for Stores and Clothing owing to surplus stocks available after the war	750,000
6.	Miscellaneous, including Deferred Pay, &c. ...	148,000
		1,408,000

OUTSTANDING CHARGES.

It is hoped that all outstanding charges in connection with South Africa and China will be covered by the grants in 1903–04, and will be brought to account against that year.

SOMALILAND EXPENDITURE.

As regards Somaliland, in view of the impossibility at the present moment of forecasting the duration of the operations, no provision has been made in these Estimates for any expenditure in 1904–05.

It is hoped that in the course of a few weeks the War Office will be in a better position to judge of the situation, in which case an additional estimate will be presented.

SOUTH AFRICAN GARRISON.

Provision has been made in these Estimates for a permanent garrison in South Africa of about 21,500 men, comprising 4 Cavalry regiments, 2 batteries Royal Horse Artillery, 12 batteries Royal Field Artillery, 2 companies Garrison Artillery, 6 companies Royal Engineers, 10 Line battalions, 4 Garrison regiments, together with the necessary departmental units.

The excess cost of maintaining this force in South Africa, instead of at home, is estimated at 1,360,000*l.*, for which provision is made in these Estimates.

Permanent accommodation for the troops in South Africa will, it is hoped, with the exception of that for those stationed at Pretoria, be provided during the early part of the summer. At Pretoria, owing to a subsidence and consequent cracking of a portion of the new reservoir, the General Officer Commanding has just reported that the permanent barracks for a part of the garrison will not be ready until September next. Married quarters for the normal married establishment of units will, it is hoped, be ready by June next. For the married families of the Royal Garrison regiments over and above 60 per regiment, it will not be ready until the end of December.

ARMAMENTS AND RESERVES UNDER THE MOWATT PROGRAMME.

Of the 10½ millions which it was decided in 1900 to spend on the completion of coast defences and the provision of reserves of stores and clothing, 8,700,000*l.* was for armaments, stores and clothing, the remainder being for fortifications and storehouses, provision for which is made by Loan.

APPENDIX I.

At the end of March, 1904, the reserves of general stores and of clothing will be practically complete. The whole of the artillery and machine guns will also have been finished by that date, with the exception of some of the reserves of the heaviest natures, in the manufacture of which there has been some delay, and of some siege artillery, the patterns of which have not yet been settled. The sum required to complete this programme, about 400,000*l.*, has been provided in the Estimates. Further particulars, showing the progress made, will be circulated shortly.

The recommendation of the Mowatt Committee is accepted, to the effect that the approved scale of reserves shall be permanently maintained, and that in the event of any stores or clothing being withdrawn for service, they shall be immediately and automatically replaced.

NEW PATTERNS OF ARTILLERY AND RIFLES.

New patterns of quick-firing equipments for both Horse and Field Artillery have been selected, and manufacture is about to commence. An improved pattern of rifle was approved in 1903, and for some months past both Government factories and contractors have been engaged on its manufacture. Deliveries of the new arm will be commenced at an early date.

It has been decided to concede to the Indian Government priority of supply of the new Artillery equipments, as well as a large share of the first year's deliveries of rifles.

It will not be possible to secure delivery during 1904–05 of more than the number of complete batteries assigned to India; but manufacture will be in full swing in the latter part of the year, and rapid deliveries of batteries for the Home Army will take place throughout the following year. Arrangements are being made to complete practically the whole re-armament, together with a large number of reserve batteries by the 31st March, 1907, at a total cost of about 3,150,000*l.* This will involve a considerable increase on the Army Estimates of 1905-06 and 1906–07.

RECRUITING.

The Report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting dealt only with the first 9 months of 1903. The total number of ordinary recruits taken during the whole year (excluding those for Colonial Corps, &c.) was 40,339, as compared with 50,753 in 1902. In January, 1904, the number was 5,225, as compared with 5,818 in January of the preceding year.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Select Committee on National Expenditure, a comparative statement of the expenditure, under Votes, for a series of years, has been prefixed to these Estimates.

H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER.

WAR OFFICE,
27th February, 1904.

APPENDIX II.

PUBLIC BILLS

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Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the Lords.

(A.) House of Lords.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Allotments (London) [H.L.]	*Earl Carrington*	Read 1^a 4th Mar. (166)
Bishopric of Bristol [H.L.]	*Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*	Read 2^a 8th Mar. (435) Committee 10th Mar. (717) Report 17th Mar. (1375)
Irish Land [H.L.]	*Lord Muskerry*	Read 1^a 18th Mar. (434)
*Justices of the Peace [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 1^a 11th Mar. (846) Read 2^a 15th Mar. (1102) Committee Report 17th Mar. (1374)
*Naval Prize [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 1^a 7th Mar. (266)
Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) [H.L.]	*Lord Ribblesdale*	Committee Report 3rd Mar. (4) Read 3^a and passed 4th Mar. (202)
Polling Districts (County Councils) [H.L.]	*Lord Ribblesdale*	Committee Report 3rd Mar. (4) Read 3^a and passed 4th Mar. (202)
Prevention of Cruelty to Children Amendment [H.L.]	*Lord Alverstone*	Read 2^a 15th Mar. (1104)
*Prize Courts [H.L.]	*Lord Chancellor*	Read 1^a 7th Mar. (266)
Shops [H.L.]	*Earl Beauchamp*	Read 1^a 8th Mar. (434)
*Site for Duke of York's School [H.L.]	*Lord Windsor*	Read 2^a 8th Mar. (435)
Sunday Closing (Shops) [H.L.]	*Lord Avebury*	Read 1^a 14th Mar. (919)
Wild Birds' Protection Acts Amendment	*Marquess of Granby*	Read 2^a 3rd Mar. (4) Committee 10th Mar. (716) Report 17th Mar. (1374)

(B) HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Army (Annual)	*Mr. Arnold-Forster*	Read 1° 17th March (1492)
Collegiate Charges (Scotland)	*Mr. James Campbell*	Read 1° 16th March (1267)
Conciliation Arbitration Act (1896) Amendment	*Mr. Bell*	Read 1° 10th March (767)
*Congested Districts (Scotland)	*Mr. Graham Murray*	Read 1° 3rd March (85)
Crofters' Holdings (Scotland)	*Mr. Leveson-Gower*	Read 1° 8th March (467)
Foreign Trawlers' Regulation	*Mr. Black*	Read 1° 3rd March (85)
Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Bill Withdrawn 14th Feb. (950)
Infant Life Protection Act (1897) Amendment	*Mr. Spear*	Read 1° 17th March (1415)
*Irish Land	*Mr. Wyndham*	Read 1° 9th March (593)
*Labourers (Ireland)	*Mr. Wyndham*	Read 1° 9th March (593)
Land Values Assessment and Rating	*Mr. Trevelyan*	Read 2° 11th March (857)
Local Government Act (1888) Amendment	*Mr. Spear.*	Read 1° 17th March (1415)
Local Government (Scotland) Act (1894) Amendment	*Mr. J. C. Wason.*	Read 1° 7th March (332)
Merchant Shipping	*Mr. Runciman*	Read 1° 15th March (141)
Nurses and Private Nursing Homes (Registration)	*Mr. Claude Hay*	Read 1° 7th March (432)
Old Age Pensions (No. 3.)	*Sir James Rankin*	Read 1° 3rd March (85)
*Prisons (Scotland)	*Mr. A. Graham Murray*	Read 1° 14th March (1000)
*Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Scotland)	*Mr. Cochrane*	Read 1° 3rd March (85)
Sale of Whisky	*Sir Herbert Maxwell*	Read 1° 7th March (332)
Teinds (Scotland)	*Mr. Maxwell*	Read 1° 14th March (1000)
Tied Houses	*Mr. Broadhurst*	Read 1° 9th March (593)
Tied Houses (Freeing)	*Mr. Rea.*	Read 1° 11th March (916)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Town Holdings	*Mr. Channing*	Read 1° 8th March (468)
Town Tenants (Ireland)	*Mr. MacVeagh*	Second Reading Defeated 4th March (208)
Trawlers' Certificates Suspension	*Mr. Harmsworth*	Read 1° 3rd March (86)
Vaccination	*Mr. Broadhurst*	Read 1° 9th March (592)
Vagrancy	*Sir John Gorst*	Read 1° 10th March (767)
Workmen's Compensation	*Mr. Bell*	Read 1° 10th March (767)

APPENDIX III.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1904.

LIST OF RULES, ORDERS, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

[*In continuance of List given in preceding Volume.*]

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Education (Scotland) (Continuation Classes),—Copy of Code of Regulations for Continuation Classes providing further Instruction for those who have left School, 1904 [35 and 36 Vic., c. 62, s. 67]	3 March	One month
Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877 (Oxford),—Copy of Statute made by the Governing Body of All Souls College, Oxford, on 21st November 1903, amending Statute 12a, Clause 2, of the Statutes of the College [40 and 41 Vic., c. 48, s. 50]	8 March	12 weeks.
Military Manœuvres, 1904,—Copy of Draft Order in Council relative to Military Manœuvres, 1904 [60 and 61 Vic., c. 43, s. 1]	9 March	30 days
College Charter Act, 1871 (Yorkshire College, Leeds),—Copy of Application received from the Yorkshire College, Leeds, for the Establishment of a University in Leeds, which was referred by His Majesty in Council for the Consideration and Report of a Committee of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council; together with a Copy of the Draft of the Charter applied for [34 and 35 Vic., c. 63, s. 2]	17 March	30 days
Public Records (Admiralty),—Copy of Eleventh Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents which have been removed from the Office of the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and deposited in the Public Record Office, but are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation therein [40 and 41 Vic., c. 55, s. 1]	17 March	4 weeks.
Public Records (Court of Exchequer),—Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents which formerly were or ought to have been in the Office of First Fruits and Tenths in the late Court of Exchequer, and which are now in the Public Record Office, but which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation therein [40 and 41 Vic., c. 55, s. 1]	17 March	4 weeks.

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[AUTHORISED EDITION].

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Qs. Mr. D. MacIver, Mr. A. Taylor; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Mar. 16*, 1263–1264.
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Q. Mr. H. Roberts; *A.* Sir W. Anson, *Mar. 14*, 981.

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Q. Mr. Yoxall; *A.* Mr. V. Cavendish, *Mar. 15*, 1124–1125.
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Art and Science Buildings—£15,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Bankruptcy Department (Board of Trade)—£3, *Mar.* 14, 1001, 1059; Rep, *Mar. 16*, 1268.

British Museum—£80,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum—£14,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Charity Commission—£15,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Civil Service Commission—£18,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Colonial Office—£25,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Colonial Services—£340,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

County Courts—£4,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Customs—£350,000, *Mar. 14*, 1004, 1062; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1271.

Date of Publication of.
Q. Mr. Buchanan; *A.* Mr. V. Cavendish, *Mar. 3*, 45.

Diplomatic and Consular Buildings—£20,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Diplomatic and Consular Services—£250.000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

Education, Board of—£7,000,000, *Mar. 14*, 1000, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1267.

Exchequer and Audit Department—£25,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Foreign Office—£30,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Friendly Societies Registry—£3,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

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Harbours (Board of Trade)—£10,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Home Office—£60,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

House of Commons Offices—£12,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

House of Lords Offices—£6,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Houses of Parliament Buildings—£16,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1267.

Inland Revenue—£830,000, *Mar. 14*, 1004, 1062; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1271.

Ireland.
Agriculture, Department of—£80,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office—£1,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.
Chief Secretary for—£12,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.
County Court Officers, etc.—£45,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.
Development Grant—£184,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1062; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.
Dublin Metropolitan Police—£60,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum—£3,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.
Endowed Schools Commissioners—£400, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1061; Rep, *Mar. 16*, 1270.
Hospitals and Charities—£17,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1062; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.
Land Commission—£55,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.
Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions—£32,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.
Local Government Board—£25,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.
Lord Lieutenant's Household—£2,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.
National Gallery—£2,500, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.
Prisons—£50,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.
Public Education—£760,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.
Public Record Office—£2,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.
Public Works and Buildings—£110,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

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Ireland—*cont.*

Public Works Office—£18,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Queen's Colleges—£2,500, *Mar. 14*. 1003, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

Railways—£60,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Reformatory and Industrial Schools—£55,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Registrar General's Office—£6,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Royal Irish Constabulary—£600,000. *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Supreme Court of Judicature and other Legal Departments—£43,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Valuation and Boundary Survey—£7,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Land Registry—£18,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Law Charges—£45,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Local Government Board—£85,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Lunacy Commission—£5,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Mercantile Marine Services—£30,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, etc.—£2,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1062; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

Mint, (including Coinage)—£5, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances—£1,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1062; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

Miscellaneous Expenses—£17,587, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1062; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

Miscellaneous Legal Buildings—£30,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Miscellaneous Legal Expenses—£28,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

National Debt Office—£6,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

National Gallery—£10,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

National Portrait Gallery—£3,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

Osborne—£10,000, *Mar. 14*, 1000, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1267.

Peterhead Harbour—£10,000 *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Police—£17,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Civil Service Estimates—*cont.*

Post Office—£3,800,000, *Mar. 14*, 1004, 1062; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1271.

Post Office Packet Service—£250,000, *Mar. 14*, 1004, 1062; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1271.

Post Office Telegraphs—£2,100,000, *Mar. 14*, 1004, 1062; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1271.

Telegraph Subsidies and Pacific Cab'e—£35,000 *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

Prisons, England and the Colonies—£360,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Privy Council Office, etc.—£4,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Public Buildings—£160,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Public Record Office—£10,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Public Works Loan Commission—£5, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Rates on Government Property—£260,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Reformatory and Industrial Schools—£140,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Registrar General's Office—£18,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Revenue Buildings—£160,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Royal Palaces and Marlborough House—£26,000, *Mar. 14*, 1000, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1267.

Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens—£35,000, *Mar. 14*, 1,000, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1267.

St. Louis Exhibition, 1904—£60,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1062; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

Scientific Investigation, etc—£22,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

Scotland.

Crofters' Commission—£2,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Fishery Board—£8,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Law Charges and Courts of Law—£30,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar 16*, 1269.

Local Government Board—£5,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Lunacy Commission—£3,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

National Gallery—£5,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270

Prisons—£38,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

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Scotland—*cont.*

Public Education—£750,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

Register House, Edinburgh—£15,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Registrar-General's Office — £2,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Secretary for—£25,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Unexpended Balances — Specifying Votes from which Balances have remained.

Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. A. G. Murray, *Mar. 7*, 276–277.

Secret Service—£40,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Stationery and Printing—£340,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Superannuation and Retired Allowances—£300,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1062; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

Supplementary.

Further discussion of, precluded by Reduction of Vote being carried, alleged.

Os. Mr. J. Redmond, *Mar. 15*, 1147; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1147, 1149; Mr. S. MacNeill, 1147, 1148; Mr. J. F. Hope, 1148; Mr. Dalziel, 1149; Mr. G. Bowles, 1149.

Ireland—Commissioners of National Education, Expenses of—£29,500, *Com. Mar. 15*, 1141.

Savings' Banks and Friendly Societies' Deficiencies—£197,677 *Com. Mar. 15*, 1153.

Total Amounts each year from 1880 to 1904.

Q. Mr. H. Samuel; *A.* Mr. A. Chamberlain, *Mar. 8*, 448.

Supreme Court of Judicature—£140,000, *Mar. 14*, 1002, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1269.

Surveys of the United Kingdom—£90,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Telegraph Subsidies and Pacific Cable—£35,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

Temporary Commissions—£25,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1062; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

Total Estimate—£21,500,000, *Mar. 14*, 1000, 1058; *Mar. 16*, 1267.

Trade, Board of—£75,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Treasury and Subordinate Departments—£40,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1059; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Uganda and East Africa Protectorates, and Uganda Railway—£300,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

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Universities and Colleges, Great Britain, and Intermediate Education, Wales—£48,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

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Explanation of Services for which Votes are required.

Q. Sir W. B. Gurdon; *A.* Mr. V. Cavendish, *Mar. 15*, 1125–1126.

Wallace Collection—£3,000, *Mar. 14*, 1003, 1061; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1270.

Woods, Forests, etc., Office of—£8,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Works and Public Buildings, Office of—£30,000, *Mar. 14*, 1001, 1060; Rep., *Mar. 16*, 1268.

Clancy, Mr. J. J. [Dublin Co., N.]

Administration of Ireland, Allocation of Savings effected on, *Mar. 16*, 1298.

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Church Surplus Fund, Distribution of, *Mar. 16*, 1298.

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Evicted Tenants—Applications for Re-instatement—Taking Steps to comply with.

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Q. Mr. Roche; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Mar. 7*, 321.

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Motor-car services, Districts inspected with a view to establishment of.

Q. Mr. W. Redmond; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Mar. 10*, 753.

Cleggan, Galway

Marine Works at, Date of Commencing.

Q. Mr. O'Malley; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Mar. 3*, 71–72.

Clifden, Galway
Marine Works at, Date of Commencing.
Q. Mr. O'Malley; A. Mr. Wyndham, *Mar. 3*, 71–72.

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Parish Committee of Congested Districts Board—Meetings held on Sundays.
Q. Mr. Sloan, A. Mr. Wyndham, *Mar. 3*, 67.

Clyde Navigation (Shieldhall Dock) Bill
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Q. Mr. D. A. Thomas; A. Mr. G. Balfour, *Mar. 9*, 556.
German Exports to France in 1901, 1902 and 1903.
Qs. Mr. B. Jones, *As.* Mr. G. Balfour, *Mar. 3*, 61, *Mar. 7*, 274.
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Q. Mr. A. Taylor; A. Mr. Lyttelton, *Mar. 17*, 1396.
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Q. Mr. L. Walton; A. Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Mar. 7*, 323–324.
Smokeless Steam—Annual Consumption by the Navy and Cost in each of the Past Ten Years—Welsh Coal, etc.
Q. Sir L. Knowles; A. Mr. Pretyman, *Mar. 16*, 1130.
Supply of—Committee of Inquiry on Resources of.
Report presented, *Mar. 8*, 433, 446.
Second Report, Publication of.
Q. Mr. D. A. Thomas; A. Mr. V. Cavendish. *Mar. 14*, 977–979.

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Unskilled Foreign Labour in Scotch, Preventive Measures proposed.
Q. Mr. J. Wilson; A. Mr. A. Douglas, *Mar. 17*, 1403–1404.

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Os. Mr. C. Hobhouse, *Mar. 17*, 1498; Mr. Lee, 1503.

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O. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 3*, 113.

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Q. Sir J. Leng; A. Mr. Brodrick, *Mar. 9*, 558–559.
Silver—Imports of, July to Dec. 1903—Amount of Government Imports—Value of Silver coined, etc.
Q. Sir J. Leng; A. Mr. Brodrick, *Mar. 9*, 559.
Nigeria—Government Premium on imported Silver Coin, Suggested Removal of.
Q. Mr. Lawrence; A. Mr. Lyttelton, *Mar. 17*, 1390-1391.
Uganda Protectorate—Introducing holed Coins representing Decimal Parts of the Rupee.
Q. Mr. C. Wason; A. Earl Percy, *Mar. 9*, 557.

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Q. Sir C. Dilke; A. Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Mar. 16*, 1246.

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Recruiting for, proposed.

Qs. Capt. Jessel, *Mar. 9*, 643; *Mar. 17*, 1429.

Borneo, British North, suitability of, for Cotton Cultivation.

Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. Lyttelton, *Mar. 7*, 297.

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Qs. Mr. C. McArthur, Mr. G. Bowles; *A.* Mr. Lyttelton, *Mar. 16*, 1249–1250.

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Qs. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, *Mar. 9*, 614; Mr. E. Robertson, 634.

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